

# THE

Or

*Vertues Historie.*

To the Honorable and vertuous Mistris  
AMY AVDELY.

*By F. R.*



*At London*

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1598.







## To the Reader.

**N**Or list I craue the gentle Readers prayse,  
Nor make base prayers to the Critick eares,  
Nor humbly beg for vnderferued bayes,  
My bolder Muse no cruell censure feares:  
Let starueling Poets and that baser sort,  
To wrested fauour witles heads exhort.

Nor doe I feare those *Scyllas* dogged heades,  
Which still are barking at the passingers;  
And sate their thirstie iawes on worthier deedes,  
Scorning the bones of threedbare carrion verse:  
My Muse shall flie those Basilisks aspect,  
VVhich with their poysoned rayes all things infect.

The sixteenth spring had with her flowrie vaile  
VVrapt all the earth, warm'd with th'approching Sunne,  
And did gainst winters ragged force preuaile;  
Who streight to cold *Cocytus* streames did runne:  
Where in congealed frost for deepe disgrace,  
He wilfull hides his blushing hoary face.

VVhen I too yong doe driue this chariot,  
Plowd vp the furrowes of my fruitles wit,  
And in this spring this timely child begot,  
And to mens fauours now aduenture it:  
VVhere let it hazard for more lucky chance,  
And with his worth his humble name aduance.



## To the Reader.

Where infant flie the lowring browes of age,  
Auoyd the wrinkles of his furrowed face,  
Thy state fits not their grauer carriage,  
But to the yonger sort direct thy pace:  
VVhere while thou sitst thy loued peeres among,  
Bid them or not correct or mend thy song.

And fly the earthly poets seruile soule,  
That sels the Muses for each peasants brasse;  
Those mercenaries faults thou maist controule,  
VVhose deeds sayre *Helicon's* sweet streames debase:  
And thou more glorying in immunitie,  
Fly farre the name of prentise-poetrie.

Next scorne the scorner of a Poets pen,  
That counts it base in tuned lines to sing,  
And leaues it for the poore and needy men,  
That hope to gaine by rimed flattering:  
Tell him not all *Parnassus* yet is sold,  
But yet one head the louely Muses hold.

VVhich heau'nly *Sydney* liuing did adorne,  
And Scottish *James* bedeckt with princely writ,  
VVhose names black enuy and deaths force doe scorne,  
Eterniz'd with the glorie of their wit:  
Whose hallowed steps not to be troden more,  
Following a farre full humbly I adore.

The



## The Prologue vnto the first Booke.

**T**Hese haue I carelesse writ with running hand,  
VVhom art not shadoweth, but as clearest light,  
VVanting none Oedipus all open stand,  
Fit for the dimmer eyes and weaker sight.

But they whose Eagle-eyes can dare the Sunne,  
And loue high soaring from the lowly ground,  
Let them not blame what I haue wilfull done,  
Some better like the Oaten rurall sound.

And let those curious eyes a while await,  
Vntill the second seruice shall begin,  
VVhere we will seeke for some more dainty meate,  
And stranger fruites then on this table been:  
VVhere if they list they may their thirst appease,  
VVhich songs my Muse to higher tunes shall raise.





## The Argument.

**O**f that same Ile which darknes long hath chained  
In gloomy prison of obscurity;  
Islandia I meane, so long retained  
From humane view by times impiety;  
Olde stories newly shall be intertaind.  
Freed from the silent graves impurity,  
To tell the vertuous though their dayes doe end,  
Yet on their fall their glory doth ascend.

Ariost. cant. 32. Islandia that Artick-seated Ile,  
Of which th' Italian swan sung long agoe,  
Whose Queene the lothed woers did beguile,  
And caus'd them for a shield to Paris goe,  
And for her sake to suffer Lones exile,  
Exagitate by dangers so and fro:  
From thence my pen must fetch her forraine taske,  
And thence transport my hidden stories maske.

Onely (sweete you) to Whom this shew shall come,  
Harken attentive to the strangers tale  
Summond thus lately from Oblivions tombe,  
Expecting for your favours gentle gale:  
Else shall he wish that he had still beene dombe,  
Nor rayse his pitch from out that lowly vale:  
Where loue enioynd him for a while to dwell,  
To paint the torments of that burning bell.

CANT.

# Vertues Historie.

## CANT. 1.

*Aged Sobrinus and his wife  
Are tane a sleepe, their daughter flies :  
The Captaine riddes his mates of life,  
Because they quarrels doe denife.  
At last the stately fort they burnd;  
And with Erona thence he turnd.*

**D**OWNE in a valley lies a bushy woode,  
Of mighty trees in order faire composde,  
Within whose center stately buildings stooode,  
In this aire-climbing Siluan wall enclosde,  
And seemde their equall tops each other woo'd,  
That Arte to Nature all her strength opposde:  
And Nature scorning at her seruants pride,  
With a dimme shadow did her beautie hide.

Within this Castle dwelt an aged Sire,  
Who with his yeares had learnd experience,  
And though he wanted youths now-quenched fire,  
Yet had a holy flame, sweet residence,  
And kindled in his heart a pure desire,  
To doe good workes and farre from all offence :  
*Sobrinus* was his name, his nature such,  
He thought his almes too few, his wealth too much.

And yet he gaue to poore continuall plenty,  
Filling the bellies which were long vnfed ;  
And quickly made his treasure coffers empty,  
Sparing himselfe to giue the needy bread ;  
Such was his goodnes, such his liberall bounty,  
As still he payd though still he borrowed ;  
Their port was small he and his wife alone,  
A daughter and a maide but seruants none.

Thus



## *Vertues Historie.*

Thus had they spent the tenor of their dayes  
In mirth, with reason, and in ioy with meane;  
He neuer felt sad sicknes sharpe disease,  
And she from any grieve was euer cleane,  
Both post the troubles of lifes wearie wayes,  
And scapt those dangers which doe others paine,  
Sleeping securely each in others brest,  
No feare their careles mindes had ere opprest.

Vntill when Night the counseller of ill,  
Had lift her cloudy head from pitchy deepes,  
And did with darknes all th'Horizon fill,  
Mischiefe the hellish witch that neuer sleepes,  
VWhen euery thing besides is calme and still,  
From out her snaky cabin vgly creepes;  
And tooke with her a box of diuelish drugs,  
VWhich issue from her venome-nourisht dugs.

Sister she is of hell begotten Night,  
Her eyes by day are dimme, and still she lyes  
VWithin her cell, remoued from the light:  
But when the tyred Sunne to bedward hyes,  
Then doth she bristle vp her wings for flight,  
As soone as she her sister once espyes:  
And going thence she flies with double haste,  
And comes back mourning that her ioy doth waste.

And now this hag of Hell, foule loathsome spright,  
Crawling from out her gore-bedewed nest;  
And hauing set her skalie pineons right,  
Trauailes when other things from labour ceast,  
And to a groue adioyning takes her flight,  
VWhere after boles of wine and riotous feast,  
Buried in sleepe the theeues and robbers lay,  
Forgetting that the night had brought their day.

She

## *Vertues Historie.*

She hauing entred to this cell of sinne,  
Her self more sinfull then sins loathsome cell,  
To sprinkle all their bodies doth beginne,  
And charme them with this soule-peruerting spell:  
Which done she lifts her on her double sinne,  
And slowly flies vnto her vices Hell:  
Which done she weepes vpon her pitchie dore,  
That she should in ere she had mischief'd more.

The while that rout of mischief-tainted theeues,  
Rouzing each other from their cabinets,  
One puls the other by their venom'd sleeues,  
And with more poyson all his hand bewets,  
Which with more stings his egged conscience greeces,  
That this their stay should interpose more lets:  
At last all wak't, all into counsell fall,  
And which hurteth most, that pleaseth all.

At length their Captaine *Bonaualant* hight,  
Riseth from out their hellish counsell-house,  
And takes a golden cup with pearles bedight,  
And drinking to his mates a full carrouse,  
Tels them, let neuer danger you affright,  
Nor let your harts great hils bring foorth a mouse;  
But follow me that still haue happie beene,  
(The worser hap for some such hap was scene.)

Then all arising like the studious Bees,  
That for the golden hony follow fast:  
Each hopes to gaine his serious labours fees,  
And every one doth scorne to follow last,  
Least he his hoped fruits perhaps might leese,  
Therefore each strives to make more speedie hast:  
At length they come vnto this stately fort,  
And each to mischief doth his friend exhort.

B

Eu'n



## *Vertues Historie.*

Eu'n as when good *Aeneas* crost the seas,  
And *Aeolus* sent his whirling seruants out;  
*Neptune* awaked from his nightly ease,  
Calde all his *Tritons* and his guard about,  
And counseld all the tumults to appease,  
And be reueng'd on that vnruely rout :  
So doe these rau'n-tongd birds of *Plutoes* quier,  
Complot to spoyle that holy sleeping fier.

At last with violence and open force,  
They brake the posternes of the Castle gate,  
And entred spoyling all without remorse,  
Nor could old *Sobrin* now resist his fate,  
But stiffe with feare eu'n like a senceles corse,  
Whom grisly terror doth so much amiate,  
He lyes supine vpon his fatall bed,  
Expecting eu'ry minute to be dead.

While as *Denota* his religious wife,  
Sent prayers the sweet ambassadors to God,  
The heralds to prepare a better life :  
For now approacheth deaths deuastating rod,  
Sharper then sharpest edge of keenest knife,  
That with his stroke denyes lifes long abroad:  
Which now is setled in these butchers hands,  
That bound in chaines of sinne passe conscience bands.

Vp rushing now vnto the lodge they runne,  
Striuing who first should worke this cruell deed :  
Nor could their prayers stay what was begunne,  
But still they prosecute with greater speed,  
And long it seem'd before their fact was done,  
So much did blood their hellish hunger feed,  
That to inuent some kind of cruell death,  
They added loathed respite to their breath.

## *Vertues Historie.*

At last one bellowed from his woluish throat,  
This bloody doome the brat of sauage minde,  
Quoth he, Then let this old gray-haired goat  
Be set in graue aliue, and there be pinde,  
And to this varlet, which for age doth dote,  
To be beheaded only is assignde:  
So is he buried ere his corps be dead,  
And she with cruell blow parts from her head.

So haue I seene the chaste and purest doue,  
Striken by cruell fowlers shiuering shot,  
Disseuerd from her nere-forsaken loue,  
Fall on the ground ere she her selfe had wot,  
And with one spraule for sweetest liuing stroue,  
But all her piteous strugling helpt her not:  
So haue I seene that purest bird to dye,  
As here doth this sweet carkasse mangled lye.

Now whiles this wicked pageant thus is playd,  
*Viceina* daughter to this reuerend man,  
Viewing these facts and of the like as frayd,  
As fast as tender thighes transport her can,  
Flyes comfortles, and poore forsaken mayd,  
Her looke with former terror pale and wan:  
But her mis-haps when these black deeds are told,  
In sequent lines more fit I will vnfold.

The house all ransackt, and the coffers torne,  
They found *Sobrinus* mayd *Erona* calde,  
Whom *Bonauglant* thence would streight haue borne,  
For she was fayre and then with feare appalde,  
She added doule grace to that before,  
Which with sharpe stings his burning stomack galde,  
That with this ouerscorching passion fir'd,  
To carry her closely thence he streight conspir'd.



## *Vertues Historie.*

But they whose eyes foule lawles lust had taught,  
Moued with enuie at so faire a pray,  
Told him that he false treacherie had wrought,  
In seeking thus to steale the prize away,  
Since it was common, and in common caught,  
He should vnto the common lawes obay,  
Which is, that what so ere by force was gaine,  
Should to their common vse still be retaind.

But he whom beautie, and these words commou'd,  
Drew out his often-blood-embrewed sword,  
And cryes ; here take the sport so much ye lou'd ;  
This lasse shall kisses to your lips afford,  
And with that speech his mightie valour prou'd ;  
And cloue ones skull like to a riuen bord :  
The second laying downe the ware he found,  
Left ware, and crased head vpon the-ground.

Their fellowes seeing this their mates mis-hap,  
Left all their treasure, and their gaine behind,  
And fearing some ensuing thunderclap,  
In coward swiftnes do their safetie finde,  
While he triumphing in this lucky hap,  
Taught by the maid two coursers doth vnbind,  
Which in a roome with mightie cords were tied,  
And long had there laine still vnoccupied.

Then doth he set much fewell all about,  
Encompassing the walls of all the towers:  
And that no flame might quench the fier out,  
He lightens all the wood-ingraued bowers,  
Which ioyned to the wall full faire and stout,  
And perisht quickly built in many howers;  
While he and she in dawning of the day,  
Mounted aloft and parted thence away.

The

## *Vertues Historie.*

The fuming vapors mount vnto the skie,  
Where turned into teare-distilling raine,  
They mourne their masters helples miserie,  
Returning to the former seat againe :  
But viewing there the spoyles of iniurie,  
In trickling streames they mourne his torturing paine,  
While raging *Phœbus* wrapt in duskie clowdes,  
Angrie with fates his mantled visage shrowdes.

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### CANT. 2.

*Viceina wanders all forlorne,  
In midstest darknes of the night :  
But at the rising of the morne,  
She meetes the wicked lustfull knight;  
Whom once well knownen she defies,  
Hating those sensuall vanities.*

**T**Hus raignes deepe sacriledge and wicked armes,  
Yspent in persecuting vertuous soules:  
The fire is quencht, which with his vigour warmes  
Distressed hearts, now truth doth hide in hoales,  
Afraid of falshoods terrifying alarmes,  
Whose enuious force her sweetest rest controules:  
Iustice from out the goared earth is flowne,  
And left her vertues offspring all alone.

From which poore stock this sweet *Viceina* bred,  
Wanders unhappie virgin all forlorne,  
Foule cares doe deadly wrack that blessed head,  
Whose braine in streaming teares is much forworne,  
For pitie that her steps are so mis-led  
In blackest night, and cannot see the morne:  
Yet still she hopes on that sweet Sunne of light,  
Which leades her soule in all this earthly night.



## *Vertues Historie.*

At length the Mornings chariot climbd aloft,  
Bringing sweet comfort to this pilgrim mayd,  
The gratefull light which she so long had sought,  
To guide her errant footsteps farre astrayd,  
When viewing whither now her feete were brought,  
Her sighing heart was drerily dismayd,  
And sorrow furrow'd her sweet countenance,  
With black remembrance of her sad mischance.

Yet still she moues in vnaccustom'd pace,  
And meanes to try fatall misfortunes worst,  
Plunged in various thoughts distorting case,  
And tortur'd thus by enuy most accurst,  
At last she spide a Deere that fled apace,  
Whose bleeding side a piercing dart had burst,  
And fled and ranne, and as he ranne and fled,  
Moued with grieve downe trickling teares he shed.

When followes on a lusty courser set,  
A goodly knight (as seem'd) and faire of looke,  
That striues in swiftest course his game to get:  
But quickly all his game and course forfooke,  
When once he saw, then deare a dearer let,  
And to this Pilgrim back his iourney tooke,  
And from his horse dismounted to the ground,  
Comforts her with his words alluring sound.

And then her state he curious doth enquire,  
Asking the cause of her distressed plight,  
When she Sir knight replide, let me desire,  
Not to torment an ouer-tired wight,  
With new memoriall of her fates so dire,  
Rubbing my soule with a fresh tragick sight,  
Only (faire sir) helpe this my poore estate,  
And I your seruice euer will awaite.

Moued

## *Vertues Historie.*

Moued with pitie much, but more with lust,  
He dar'd not countermand her sad demaunds,  
But from his heart with pleasures flames combust,  
Vollied these words scarce shut in vertues bands:  
Come (sayre) and to my gentle mercie trust,  
And yeeld thy bodie to my embracing hands,  
He leade thee where in pleasure thou shalt dwell,  
Remoued from black melancholies hell.

*Viceina* whose most pure milk-washed hart  
Neuer supposde what fraud before did plot,  
Told him to ease her soules tormenting smart,  
And that she thought such looke maintained not  
Foule knightoods shame, to work her sorrowes part,  
Agreed to take her offerd fortunes lot:  
Then hand in hand conioynd they forward went,  
And in sweet talke their tedious wayes they spent.

Foule euill on his cursed heart alight,  
For thus seducing thence the virgins feete,  
For this same knight *Philedonus* is hight,  
And he to pleasure giu'n for men ynmeete:  
Yet faire he seemeth at the sudden sight,  
Yet foule he is at last when men him weete;  
Vnder a pleasing hew and ciuill hood,  
He carries poyson'd baytes and venom'd food.

With which slie crafts and flatteries deceiu'd,  
Vnto his castel she agrees to goe;  
Where comming they full fairely were receiu'd  
Of one *Makerus*, who downe binding low,  
Told her that happily she was arriu'd,  
And many gratefull speeches did bestow:  
At last vnto a stately hall he brought her,  
Glad that within his limits he had caught her.

Foule



## *Vertues Historie.*

Foule wight he was that at his masters gate,  
Which open stood vpon a beaten way,  
All commers passage carefull did awaite,  
And when he spide them like a cock at day,  
He lifting vp his vgly carrion pate,  
To trap them with sweet musick doth assay:  
For he an Eunuch is, and sweetly sings,  
And to their cares deepe rauishment he brings.

But hoping now that this new guest is sure,  
Prepares no prologue for his Comedie,  
And as alreadie taught to know the lure,  
He leades her to a lodging by and by:  
But as they past, sights did her eyes allure,  
Her eyes, but not her heart to vanitie:  
For she full warie was what ere she did,  
Resisting still to what delight did bid.

But this that now her careles eyes did view,  
Was how within the spacious builded hall,  
She saw faire youths and maydens in a rew,  
Treading sweet measures at the musicks call,  
And then anon as fetching forces new,  
Into each others arnes they kissing fall:  
Where quenching pleasures thirst with beauties dew,  
Their wonted dancing they againe renew.

But turning quickly thence her lothing eyes,  
She followes where her wicked captaine guides,  
Who nimbly mou'd with hellish pleasure flies,  
And at the last into a lodging slides,  
Whose fairer richest art cannot deuise,  
Nor euer can be found in earth besides:  
Where placed for a while *Makers* left her,  
While ioyfull thoughts by sorrow are bereft her.

And

## *Vertues Historie.*

And she detesting this vnseemly place,  
Wisheth that rather she had dyed abroad,  
Then euer seene this knights deceiuing face,  
And thinks how she might shorten her abroad:  
But here of force she must abide a space,  
So quickly she can neuer rid her load;  
Which keeps her blessed heart in languor pinde,  
Because no way to scape her soule can finde.

And in that fit the night approaching nye,  
Vnto her bed which there was faire prepar'd,  
As wanting rest she presently doth hye,  
But following cares her sweetest rest debar'd,  
That she in these great woes was neere to dye:  
And certes like it was she ill had far'd,  
Had not the heau'ns foreseene and sent their ayd,  
To comfort weakned heart well-nigh dismayd.

For when her fathers house in pleasure stood,  
And in the pleasant fields adioynd she went,  
There came a holy Hermite from the wood,  
That all his time in godly precepts spent,  
Who as he told of words and doings good,  
His chaine of beades about his arme vn bent,  
And sayd; this stone doth cares and grieffe expell,  
And gaue it to her and then bad fare-well.

This stone is Elpine calde, whose vertue is,  
To driue away great grieuings and dispayre:  
Or what-soere doth leade the heart amisse,  
With sweetest influence it doth repayre,  
Which now appli'd reduceth her former blisse,  
And much diminisheth her cruell care:  
Blest be the heauens which did thus prouide,  
To ease those tortures which she did abide.

C

Thus



## *Vertues Historie.*

Thus somewhat freedde from these tormenting woes,  
To sleepe her senses all she doth addresse,  
But ere her wearied members tooke repose,  
She was disturbed from her quietnesse :  
For to her chamber vp a consort goes,  
That thought to comfort her all comfortlesse,  
And rather to enchant then to delight,  
They thought, but now they want their wonted might.

And yet well neere these fiends had luld asleepe,  
With charming Musick that diuineft wight,  
But that strong vertue still sure watch did keepe,  
And put fond pleasures yeelding thoughts to flight :  
For she still marking how delight did creepe,  
And by allurements, not by force did fight,  
Stopt with her fingers her imprisond cares,  
And with stout courage all temptations beares.

At length these Crocodiles their harping ended,  
And she is left to prosecute her grieve :  
For rest is banisht thence by thoughts offended,  
Which doe accuse her for this nights reliefe,  
And cruciate themselves that condiscended,  
To fained words without some further priefe ;  
That twixt her thoughts and guilts fierce perturbation,  
Her soule is cast into a restless passion.

That little sleepe she tooke, but when she slept,  
Dreames of her fault and fained phantasies,  
Into the closet of her sweet soule crept :  
And thus the night deludes her watching eyes,  
Care all the gates of troubled senses kept,  
Which made her thinke it long ere day did rise :  
So vice and vertue strue together met,  
They cannot rest within one cabinet.

## *Vertues Historie.*

At length though long this length the morning starre,  
Told that the night was fled from out the ayre,  
When she more glad then trauailers that farre,  
Spying some tower their fainting course repayre,  
Thinking that there their longed dwellings are:  
But when they neerer come againe dispayre,  
And seeing they mis-tooke that happy place,  
Stumble againe in their fore-wonted pace.

So was she caught with hopes disguisde attire,  
When black despayre went masking all within:  
For now she saw no hope of her desire,  
Nor could she free her selfe once closed in:  
So many eyes hath lust, so hot the fire,  
Which kindles burning flames in scorched skin:  
Though *Argus* hundred eyes in watch doth keepe,  
Yet lust at length will lull them all asleepe.

So is she watcht with neuer resting eyes;  
The former hope of libertie is gone,  
And now *Philedonus* doth all deuise,  
For to entangle her thus left alone;  
Foule lust within his breast gins to arise,  
And from his heart faire blushing shame is flowne:  
And he begins with words sole-tempting sound,  
To cast her chastitie vnto the ground.

But by the happie fortune which befell,  
At last her soule was set at libertie:  
But how it chanced yet I may not tell,  
Though I am loth so long to let thee lie,  
(Sweet mayd) within the torments of this hell:  
But that same theefe so fast away doth flie,  
That I shall neuer see *Erona* more,  
Vnles I goe and fetch her back before.



# Vertues Historie.

## CANT. 3.

*Erona and her new found lone,  
Come to the bower of fond delight :  
But thence by warning they remone,  
And in a Castle spent the night :  
In morne she faines dissembled paine,  
He leaues her and goes back againe.*

**W**Hat ere thou be that to a womans care,  
Commitst affayres or matters of import,  
Too rashly to aduenture doe not dare,  
Vnles vpon some certaine truths report :  
For constancie in most is found but rare,  
And they will change their thoughts for wanton sport :  
But some there be (blest he that some can finde)  
To whom fayre graces vertue hath assignde.

Amongst which thou rare virgin of these dayes,  
(Whom only this my wandring muse hath found)  
Meritst eternall volumes of thy prayse,  
For louing Muses and their sweetest sound,  
Accepting kindly rude mis-tuned layes,  
Which els had laine long buried vnder ground :  
Be not (kind) angrie at this mayds disgrace,  
That Muse thy gifts shal praise, that doth her faults deface.

For she is worthie of perpetuall blame,  
For condescending to this theeues request :  
For now she curseth still her masters name,  
Swearing she neuer could obtaine her rest,  
Vntill this happie newes vnto her came :  
And now she sayes she'll follow his behest,  
Goe where he will, and stay where he commands,  
And lay her opend soule before his hands.

And

## Vertues Historie.

And he seduced by her flatterie,  
And blinded quite with lust and lewd desire,  
His loue is bounded by no meane degree,  
He sweares through freezing cold and burning fire,  
To be her champion for her beauties see,  
She sayes she readie is when he wil try her:  
Thus in fond pleasure they consume their dayes,  
And after sport still walke their wonted wayes.

But as they climbd the hils ascending side,  
The scortching Sunne sent downe fire-darting rayes,  
That they vnnearth this seruence could abide,  
Therefore they seeke some cooler shadowed wayes:  
At last downe in the vale a lake they spide,  
By which there was a bower of thorne and bayes,  
A bower whose ground was set with Cammomill,  
Whose bankes the sweetest rose and flowers did fill.

Where entred there they see a grauen stone,  
In which a historie was fairely writ:  
The picture of a Lady was vpon,  
And verses which were written vnder it.

*Here lyes the fairest Lady of the Ile,*

*Whom from sweet rest fond pleasure did exile,*

*To warne the rest, who yet are kept unstaind,*

*To flie that plague, which keeps the soule enchaind.*

The theefe enamor'd on that louely hew,  
Which niggard arts weake force had much defac'd,  
Would needs the substance of that shadow view,  
And would the curious tombstone hane displac'd:  
But from this deed a noyse his fancie drew,  
And rushing of the lake as with a blast:

Where looking there they saw the fayrest face,  
Whose louely feature did the Swannes disgrace.



## *Vertues Historie.*

But by the pictures likenes streight they knew,  
This was the Ghost of that entombed mayd,  
When she: O cause not wretch more grieve to rew,  
And trouble not the bones for rest vp layd,  
But fly this place least it procure to you,  
For which my soule deere punishment hath payd.  
When seem'd her head to droupe as in a sowne,  
And with new racking grieve to sinke a downe.

But streight he cried: O tell (sweete Lady) tell,  
What danger doth attend this fearefull place,  
And how to thee this wicked hap befell,  
And how thou cam'st into this wofull case?  
Then she: as long as messengers of hell,  
Which still attending stand before my face,  
Shall suffer me to stay with you aboue,  
Ile shew you what with grieve my selfe did proue.

Heere by this riuier is a gaping pit,  
Which leades vnto the floods of *Acheron*:  
And on the mouth thereof a witch doth sit,  
That dwelleth in a roome there built vpon;  
*Getica* she is calde, who by her wit,  
Hath damn'd to restles dolours many one:  
And she (before *Persephone* was Queene)  
Had *Plutoes* Concubine long season beene.

But now to her this dwelling is assignde,  
Where she hath leaue to charme each truest hart,  
And in eternall torturing to binde,  
The soules she hath entrapped by her art;  
And she enrag'd, that men sweet ioy should finde,  
Not bearing any of her torments part,  
Assayes by all the meanes she can inuent,  
To make them fellowes in her punishment.

And

## *Vertues Historie.*

And euery yeare once she a feast doth make,  
Within that bower, where you now doe lye:  
Whither full many a knight his way doth take,  
And many a Lady thitherward doth hye:  
When she her loathed house doth soone forsake,  
Attir'd in robes and portly maiestye,  
And to the banquet house doth solemne come,  
Welcomming all with voyce, and kissing some.

And after meat a seruice all of wine,  
Is brought before the guests, when thus she sayes;  
My wish (sweete friends) is you should better dine,  
And haue some cheere that were more worthie prayse:  
But this I hope shall rest as loues sure signe,  
The rest shall be supplied in other waies:  
Onely the while take this in gentle part,  
From one desiring to get more desert.

Heere are as many cups as you are heere,  
Fild with some liquor of so forciue might,  
That what-soere you loue or holde most deere,  
As beauty, magick, riches, pleasing sight,  
Or lengthned youth, vntill full forty yeare,  
Whither it good shall be, or things vnright,  
It shall be giuen you without delay,  
Ere second night driue hence the darkned day.

On this condition that when all the date,  
(Which is the space of forty yeares or past)  
Shall be expirde, then shall you pay the rate  
Of all th'accounts, which I this while shall cast;  
Nor may ye then resist the common fate,  
For ioy long may endure, not euer last:  
This sayd, all those that wish for any good,  
Drinke vp that Philiter poysoning all their blood,

A mongst



## *Vertues Historie.*

Amongst those birds was I caught in the net,  
Layd to entrap the frayltye of youth,  
And at a little price my soule did let,  
Now all bedewd into late coming ruth,  
And I admonish you vnchained as yet,  
To credit what my soule doth finde for truth :  
Make speedie haste to get your selues away,  
To morrow comes that hellish banquet day.

This sayd, she sunke into the drowning waues,  
Drowned almost with flowing teares before,  
Like *Phaetusa*, while she madly raues,  
Playning that she could see the boy no more :  
And while his sweetest companie she craues,  
A spreading roote her feeble feete vpbore,  
A furrow'd rinde encompass all her skin,  
A tree she was without, a mayd within.

So doth she seeme to melt in liquid teares,  
For where before that fayrest substance stood,  
Nothing but bubling water now appeares:  
And while they looke vpon the billowing flood,  
Wonder their eyes possess'th, their hearts deepe feares,  
That in their face appeares no liuelihood:  
At last each plucking by the others arme,  
Giue warning both of that ensuing harme.

And mounted thence, they assay to climb the hill,  
Whose bended steepnes causde them take much paine,  
And though they mainly strive with labour still,  
Yet in much striuing they doe litle gaine ;  
The nature of the place resists their will :  
For so it is where pleasure doth remaine,  
That with a current in his armes we fall,  
But back full few can creepe, or none at all.

Nor

## *Vertues Historie.*

Not can these now attaine their mindes desier,  
But forc'd they turne their Palfreyes heads aside,  
And sory they can climbe the hill no higher,  
Vpon the conuex, all along they ride,  
At last by smokie sparkles of a fire,  
A chimney top far off they haue espyde :  
And now the Sunne was driuing to the west,  
And they were glad they found some hope of rest.

Forward they prickt, and shortly there they came,  
For all the way was playne as eye might see,  
And lighting downe he and his wanton dame,  
Goe in to know if they might lodged be,  
And he no sooner had discried his name,  
But all the knights salute him by degree :  
For all the house with knights and dames was fraught,  
Which ment to trauell for their mornings draught.

Reioycing thus that they so fit were met,  
And striuing who should shew most curtesy,  
They spend the time till on the bord was set,  
The daintiest feast that euer curious eye  
Could view, or wealth, or all the Ile could get,  
Such was this feast of filthie luxury,  
And they as prompt to take as that to bring,  
Sit downe : some eate, some drinke, some play, some sing.

Their heads perswaded by the fuming wine,  
After the empty dishes all were sackt,  
Doe condiscend their places to resigne,  
And yeeld to sleepe, which as it seem'd they lackt;  
For so the fume their ey-lids doth combine,  
That they vnneath can keepe themselues awakt,  
And still the ground as profring them a bed,  
With a kinde knocking kisse salutes their head.



## *Vertues Historie.*

At last some by the little remnant of their fight,  
And some by others helpe to bed are got,  
Where drownd in sleepe they spend the sliding night,  
And had almost in morne their care forgot:  
But wickednes that euer-haunting spright,  
Rung in their eares and warn'd them of their lot:  
And they afrajd their happy chance to lose,  
Shooke sluggard sleepe away and straight arose.

But false *Erona* fearing of her mate,  
That if he should vnto the banquet goe,  
He would forsake his choyse, and change his fate,  
And leaue her quite, and so procure her woe,  
Faines that a sudden grieve doth her amate,  
Wounded with piercing sicknes *Eben* bow,  
And sayes she cannot moue from out her bed,  
And prayes him not to leaue her almost dead.

Sweet loue (quoth she) whom in my tender armes,  
So oft I haue embrac'd and euer lou'd,  
O leaue me not alone to following harmes,  
But if that ere thy minde sayre *Meny* mou'd,  
Or yeelded to delights, or fancies charmes,  
Or if my soule doth loue thee euer prou'd,  
Then doe: and with that word so deeply sigh't,  
Asthough death on her broken heart did light.

He thinking that her griefes extremitie  
Did interrupt the office of her tung,  
And moued with her words did seeme to pitie,  
When falling downe vpon her neck he hung,  
And sayes, if my delaying could acquite ye  
From this sharpe griuance, that your heart hath sung,  
I would not leaue you for the worlds wealth,  
Nor worke disparagement vnto your health.

But

## *Vertues Historie.*

But this delay can worke you no redresse,  
But hurt me with the sight of this your payne,  
And all the other knights themselues addresse,  
To goe vnto the feast where I would fayne  
Accompany them, as my oth expresse  
Doth binde me, but I will returne againe,  
Before the sunne remoue his fierie wheelles,  
Turning vnto our view his panting Palsreyes heeles.

This sayd, he went from out her burning sight,  
Stopping his cares vnto her playning cryes,  
And she still prayes to pitie wofull wight,  
But like the faithles Troian Knight he flies,  
Leauing sweete *Dido* swelling in despight,  
Who powring raging playnts self-wounded dyes.  
So is this Knight from out her hearing gone,  
And she can onely hope he comes anone.

But how he sped, and she was left alone,  
The sequence of the story shall declare,  
But sweet *Vicinia* doth so deeply grone,  
Burdened with ouerpressing load of care,  
That sure my heart relents to heare her mone,  
And Ile assay to cause her better fare,  
For what hard heart would not all seruice doe,  
To helpe a fayre, a chaste, a woman too?



# Vertues Historie.

## CANT. 4.

*A stranger knight she mayde doth free,  
Which long had layne in pleasures bands :  
While she her foemans death doth see,  
Loofde by good fate from cursed hands,  
And with that knight her way doth take,  
Glad that foule prison to forsake.*

**T**Hough deepe distresse still threaten heavy fall,  
And stormy cloudes thy fortunes wrack presage,  
Let not white-liver'd feare thy thoughts appall,  
A power there is that can all stormes asswage,  
That makes the thunder bellow at his call,  
And parbreake sulphur vapours in his rage :  
This power is present still to ayde the iust,  
Though hembde in hostes they be of bellish lust.

So is the virgin heere preserv'd from shame,  
Which like a blood-hound haunts her hallowed seete,  
For since vnto this shameles knight she came ;  
She cannot turne but still he doth her meete,  
Tempting her soule to yeeld to foulest shame,  
With fayrest words that Pandors art did weete ;  
But still she keepes her bulwark of defence,  
Hoping some happy day will rid her hence.

But long she watch't to see that happy day,  
Before misfortune left her tyranny,  
The sliding glasse of time doth spend away,  
And therewithall her wasting hope doth fly,  
But he that in iust weights doth all things way;  
Viewing the poore opprest with cruelty,  
Sent meanes whose thought dispayring thoughts did pas,  
To helpe that dying Saint : And thus it was.

*Sobrinus*

## *Vertues Historie.*

*Sobrinus* fame through all the Ile was blowne,  
(For he was borne of royall pedegree)  
And his fayre daughters name to all was knowne,  
That holy were and hated vanitie,  
Amongst the rest her vertuous praise was flowne,  
Vnto a Lady of no meane degree,  
Whose spotles heart was purenes purest pure,  
Whose soule no sensuall thoughts could ere allure.

*Aguria* was this holy widowes name,  
For she had layd her husband in the graue,  
And since like Ancres, or a Vestal dame,  
To heauenly thoughts her minde she wholly gaue :  
But her sweet sonne a iolly knight became,  
Great thoughts to try his valiance him draue,  
And he was meeke to those that hated ill,  
But to the wicked he was fearefull still.

This knight was moued by this damfels fame,  
And with his mothers leaue departed thence,  
Vowing by heauens-makers fearfull name,  
As long as life should stay, or liuely sence,  
Not euer to returne from whence he came,  
Before (as signe of his beneuolence)  
He shall salute this Lady face to face,  
And with his armes that Saint-like Nymph embrace.

Thus purposde forth he goes, as errant knight,  
In glittring armes yclad and mightie lance,  
While vnder him in trappings gorgeous dight,  
A sturdie courser all the way doth dance,  
And as compacted of a liuely spright,  
His trampling hooves aloft he doth aduance,  
And for aduentures armd in warlike wise,  
He pricks his palfreys sides and forward tries.



## *Vertues Historie.*

But what great dangers in his weary way,  
Or what he saw or did, my Muse must passe,  
For they would much my storie course delay:  
Besides they are ingrau'd in durin' brasse,  
By one who doth antiquitie bewray,  
Writing what euer in that Island was:

Let this suffice that he now journeyes nye,  
Vnto that place whereas this Dame doth lye.

But Night had spread her gloomy wings abroad,  
Which forced thoughts of ease into his breast:  
Therefore with swifter pace he faster road,  
Hoping to get some place of gentle rest:  
But while an easie gale vnto him blowd,  
The sweetest sound that euer eare possesse,  
Which made him turne his horse toward the noyse,  
At last he came where he had heard the voyce.

And askt if lodging for a Knight there were,  
Quoth he that sung, straight leaping from his seate,  
None can approach (fayre Sir) more welcome here,  
Then those that errant are, whom knightly heate  
Enforc'th to seeke adventures faire and neere:  
And with this filed speech did worke deceit,  
The Knight full glad he had a harbour found,  
Dismounted straight and lighted to the ground.

But little did he thinke that fayrest mayd,  
Was prisoner in this cell of riotise:  
For this same castle where he now is stayd,  
Is that where poore *Vicina* captiue lyes,  
And sure they thought to haue this Knight betrayd,  
But his sweet thought did frustrate their surmise:  
Yet in this foolish hope vp was he led,  
Into a chamber fairely Arrased.

Where

## *Vertues Historie.*

Where after delicates and curious feast,  
Full weary of his way and toylsome watch,  
To pleasing sleepe his body he addrest,  
Least during labour should him ouermatch:  
When he no sooner settled him to rest,  
But slumber in his sences seate did hatch,  
Partly by toyle wherewith he now was sore,  
Partly by Musick sounding at his dore.

Thus halfe her light fayre *Cynthia* had spent,  
And he in sleepe had spent halfe *Cynthias* light,  
Vntill a cry vnto his eare was sent,  
Which did his tumbling sences all affright,  
It seem'd to come from heart in peeces rent,  
The wofull offspring of a wretched wight:  
But thus the plaint was form'd in dolesull sort,  
Carrying vnto his cares a sad report.

Haples *Viceina*, whom thy father lost,  
Ynough tormented not, though dearly lou'd,  
Nor sad remembrance of thy mothers ghost,  
Though she to teares mine eyes hath often mou'd,  
Nor thine owne harme which griueth others most,  
Ynough thy hearts great patience hath prou'd:  
But here dispoild of sweet virginie,  
Thy spotted soule in vgly sinne shall dye.

But rather let the consort of dread Night,  
(Which sing sad notes before her chariot,  
When she in progresse rides to chase the light)  
Feare me before I take Sinnes filthy blot,  
The scriching Owle race out my loathed fight,  
Before it see that sight of wretched lot,  
The rauens of darknes take my corse for pray,  
That they may hide it from the blushing day.

And



## *Vertues Historie.*

And to those ghastly shades which haunt my soule,  
And to the Night consenting to this ill,  
My latest testament I will vnroule,  
The dreery summe of my death-grauen will,  
They shall my seruants be my bell to toule,  
To ring the dolefull accents of my knill,  
Death be the head, and Shame shall be the next,  
Then Night, and Guilt which holds my heart perplext.

These on their damned backs shal beare my corse,  
Vnto the funerall which is prepar'd,  
My soule prouide thy selfe against remorse,  
From hope of better death thou art debar'd;  
For Sinne still threatens his vngentle force,  
To wound thee deeply which had els been spar'd:  
But till death come take solace in the Night,  
For darkned soule there fits no better light.

This sayd, a bitter sigh euapour'd out  
The sad conclusion of a sadder tale,  
When gan the Knight his thoughts to stir about,  
Pondring what wight thus lay in sorry bale:  
But while he wauered in vncertaine doubt,  
He soone vnto his troubled minde did call,  
How that mayd had her selfe *Viceina* hight,  
Wherewith he gan to burst with raging spight.

As *Tereus* in the banquet of his sonne,  
When he a while his hungrie wombe had fed,  
Knowing the bloodie mischiese that was done,  
And that he ate him whom before he bred,  
Into a headlong rage along did runne,  
And curs'd the liuing execrates the dead,  
In such a furie was this knight distraught,  
With thoughts of blood and vengeance fully fraught.

But

## *Vertues Historie.*

But well he could his raging fences tame,  
And thought this time was not so fit to get  
The freedome of this soule-diseased dame;  
The night and sudden noyse his deede would let,  
Therefore he rested till the morning came,  
When to this act himselfe he ready set,  
And watcht to see the Lady of his loue,  
That from this feare he might her soule remoue.

But he not long had sought the Lady fayre,  
Ere he had spide where as that lozell mare  
Walkt with her in the garden for the ayre;  
And he of lust and filthie sinne did prate,  
The Knight went straight vnto that louing payre,  
Not able longer to refraine his hate,  
When she straight blusht to see her selfe alone,  
Except this villaine compani'd of none.

Then lightned with reuenge thus gan the Knight;  
Thou foulest shame of all that breath this ayre,  
How dar'st thou to abuse this sacred wight,  
Inclosing her in den of black dispayre?  
Either defend thy deede in martiall fight,  
Or els here dye, my minde can like no prayer:  
Her champion I, and *Aidon* is my name,  
Thou or thy kind that dare defend the same.

But streight he quailing funke vnto the ground,  
For he of warre before had neuer heard,  
The name of death straight cast him in a swound,  
His heart did pant, he was so much afeard,  
The while Sir *Aidon* gaue a deadly wound  
Vnto his heart, that all the ground besmeard  
With filthie blood, his foulest pleasures price,  
The nourishment of his vngodly vice.

E

His



## *Vertues Historie.*

His soule sunke downe gnashing for furious mad,  
That she should lose the pleasures of her bower,  
Repining at the cursed fate she had,  
Thus to be banisht in vnlookt for hower:  
This while the Knight vnto that Lady sad,  
Told why and whence he came, who thank that power,  
Whose prouidence preuented her mis-hap,  
Sheelding her soule from deaths fierce thunderclap.

But thence departing to the hall they went,  
Where mingled wanton troopes of either kinde,  
Dallied together in their merriment,  
He that most filthie is, he seemes most kinde:  
The Knight could not refraine his discontent,  
But drawing soorth his sword, doth bid them finde  
Some fitter kinde of mirth, or fitter place:  
When all affrighted soorth they fled apace.

All fled, he sets on fire those walls of lust,  
Whose ayre infected was with filthie sent,  
Downe fall the walls consum'd to fruitles dust,  
With eating flames of firy force yspent,  
While *Venus* wept to see her fort combust,  
And those foundations from the bottome rent:  
But that fayre virgin with the errant Knight,  
Left those foule dwellings, glad they met so right.

But looke the Captaine now had chang'd his face,  
And out of knowledge he will shortly grow,  
If that I doe not follow him apace,  
A gowne he now hath got full hanging low:  
But wonder not at this his changed case,  
The hap which did befall, you straight shall know:  
But let me breath a while, it needs no haste,  
For yet I pant with chasing him so fast.

CANT.

# Vertues Historie.

## CANT. 5.

*Tb' inchanter on a plaine doth ly,  
And while he looketh all abroad,  
He sees a Lady passing by,  
To whom enforst with lust he ride,  
Fidamours loue and Philarets charge,  
Phucerus crueltie is told at large.*

**D**Eare soule, what euer wandrest here below,  
Chained in the finfull bodies sensuall bands,  
Yeeld not thy selfe to what doth sayrest show,  
Nor walking in these worldly *Nilus* sands,  
Giue listning to the tunes that sweet doe blow:  
Tis easie falling into pleasures hands,  
But at deare rate he selleth all his ware,  
The entrance pleaseth, but the end is care.

This hast thou found thou euer-damned ghost,  
And payest dearly for thy marchandise,  
Gnashing thy teeth in that infernall coast,  
Rowling to banisht heauen thy glowing eyes:  
Now doth he curse what once did please him most,  
Seeing his accounts to such a summe to rise,  
And in deepe horror from his bowels cries,  
To learne iustice, nor the Gods despise.

But all too late he moanes his wicked deede,  
Now was it time all euill to preuent,  
Before soule sinne had hatcht his cursed seede,  
Better he had his guts in famine spent,  
Then with this feast his poysoned flesh to feede,  
But what to doe himselfe did not repent,  
Shall not much grieue my warned minde to tell,  
Better to heare then doe what is not well.



## *Vertues Historie.*

After his faithles heart had her forlooke,  
That still ingeminates his hated name,  
With th'other knights he forth his journey tooke,  
And to *Geticas* bower at length they came,  
Where they inscrib'd their names in curf'd booke,  
Incorporated in the citie of defame,  
The citie which foule shame on earth hath built,  
To trap mens soules in finnes accusing guilt.

And euery one his sundrie choise had gaind,  
As each mans liking doth him most direct,  
But wicked *Bonaualant* hath obtaind,  
To be of *Hecates* accursed sect,  
Taught now to hold grim *Dis* and *Spirits* chained,  
And plague the furies for his words neglect,  
And foule *Megmea* at his kindled brest,  
Will rack men tortur'd soules in sad unrest.

No sooner doth he moue his charmed van,  
But hell cructs foule *Spirits* which attend,  
To worke the will of this accursed man,  
He can with deadly charmes earths belly rend,  
And with swift wings the sliding ayer fan,  
Making sterne *Plute* at his words to bend,  
One houre this Pole shall see his charmed wings,  
And in the same he to th'Antarique flings.

But now vpon a fayre plaine he doth lye,  
Harbourd within his charme-enchaunted wall,  
Where on a tower he sees who passeth by,  
Hoping at length some purchase will befall,  
On whom to worke his curf'd witchery,  
To which a sudden fight his sence doth call,  
For a farre off he sees a Lady bright,  
That armed was and all arayd for fight.

Her

## *Vertues Historie.*

Her face like *Phaeton* at the sudden rise,  
Gave such a glister in her beauties morne,  
As made him hope some vnaccustom'd price,  
And richer treasure then he saw before,  
Therefore his cursed art he now applies,  
Hoping he should this game away haue borne;  
And armed with infernall spirits might,  
Thus he assayed to close this blessed wight.

Out from his cell he flies with greatest haste,  
Like stormie *Neptun* on his dewy plumes,  
And from his castles sight he quite is past,  
Where hid in charmed fogges and chaunted fumes,  
Like to a Snake his skin he off doth cast,  
And fained shape and forme he now assumes,  
Vpon a hackney he is fairely set,  
Whose sides his feete not stirre nor staggering beat.

His hoary beard downe snowing on his breast,  
And swanny locks the chronicles of age,  
Witnesse that elder yeares haue him oppress,  
But that his sword doth tell that youthfull rage,  
Within his haughty heart is not deceast:  
Thus doth he goe as in a pilgrimage,  
Euen like *Silenus* now he doth appeare,  
But he a tankard, this a sword doth beare.

Thus doth he march toward that fayrest dame,  
His horse scarce mouing his vntoward feete,  
When as the Sunne vnto his lodging came,  
And did no sooner his faire *Thetis* greet,  
But this *Tithonus* seiled for his gaine,  
Did sayrer farre then sayre *Aurora* meete,  
And carles seemed he to passe aside,  
But though his horse goth forth, his hart doth backe abide.



## Vertues Historie.

When she back turning her celestiall spheares,  
(In one of which sweet *Venus* darts her rayes,  
In th'other *Mars* and warlike Ioue appears)  
Father (quoth she) know you how farre awayes  
Is fayre *Deledra*, where *Phucerus* beares  
The Diadem in these unhappy dayes?

Well doe I know (quoth he) but tis so farre,  
You cannot there come by the light of starre.

Then poynting to this witches charmed place,  
(Quoth she) what Knight dwels in those goodly walls,  
Or will he offer Lady this one grace,  
(Because the night me so vniuely calls)  
To entertaine me for this little space?  
And if at any time the like befalls,  
Which may requite his gentle curtesie,  
He try to quite his great humanitie.

Euen like to *Jupiter* when once he brought,  
That fayre *Europa* on his back did sit,  
Daunc'd through the flowry fields, glad he had caught  
His game, applauding his successiue wit:  
So doth this carle at this good newes, he sought,  
And to the Lady thus his speech doth fit:  
Well may you goe, none are more welcome there,  
Then those that for true cause doe armour beare.

And to assure you here my selfe will lead,  
Vnworthie loadstarre of so fayre a Sunne,  
Vnto that castle whered I sure ahead,  
Not common kindnes to you will be done:  
She harkning to his speech the path doth tread,  
Which to this labyrinth of chaine doth runne,  
Where pleasing doubt doth leade her to the center,  
But here fole *Minotours* will her incounter.

But

## *Vertues Historie.*

But least long wonder might your thoughts possesse,  
Who was this Lady, and from whence she came,  
And why here she her journey did addresse,  
I will vnfold the storie of this Dame;  
Strong loue her bounden heart doth much oppresse,  
Which any thought of danger overcame:

Not many fights and perils doe her moue,  
She counts them all but pleasures for her loue.

Vpon *Eumorphos* plaines a castle stands,  
VWhere dwelt an ancient and a comely Knight,  
VWhich all the country bordering commaunds:  
But that which greatestt raisde his glories hight,  
VWas not his treasure, nor farre stretched lands:  
But three fayre daughters, lights most brightest light,  
VWhose wondrous beautie lookers did amaze,  
That in one heauen so many Sunnes did blaze.

Amongst these lookers, one there did surprize  
An vncouth heate of vndermining loue,  
VWho knowing that stopt fire more hotly fryes,  
And with his owne light doth his cloake remoue,  
Made knowne the Comet which withdrew his eyes,  
And to his Lady did his passions proue:  
She *Philares* was calde, the eldest mayd,  
The Knight Sir *Fidamour* thus ill apayd.

VWith earnest sute an answer he hath gaind,  
The golden shaft shot soorth from *Cupids* bow,  
That if the victorie he haue obtaind,  
In that aduenture which this mayd shall show,  
His gentle proffers shall be entertaind,  
And happy match betweene these loues shall growe  
But if he doe not, then all former band  
Came back as free into the makers hand.

Downe



## *Vertues Historie.*

Downe in the westerne coast there dwelt a king,  
*Phucerus* he is hight, his goodly seate,  
Is calde *Doledra*, whose high towers doe sing  
Soft murmuring tunes, when windes then gently bear,  
And lofty turrets mighty tops doe bring,  
Vnto the skye which neuer saw so great,  
That dar'd to looke vpon the starry skye,  
And lift their masses in the ayre so hye.

Within this towne a prophesie did passe,  
That from *Eumerphes* should a mayden come,  
Whose hand should change the kingdome whence it was,  
Which made the king in priuate charge to some,  
That whosoere could bring that countries lasse,  
Vnto th'appoynted *Eumerphean* tombe,  
He should be recompent'd with liberall fee,  
Beside the grace in which he still should bee.

Thus had he slaine and tombde in bloody pit,  
Many that guiltles came with no pretence,  
And *Philaret* glad to be reuengde of it,  
Enioynd the knight these deedes to recompence,  
And to prouoke them more he should him fit,  
Womans apparell which breeds more offence.  
And thus with speare and targe he forth should goe,  
To be reuenged on his wicked foe.

Forth is he gone (the gods him prosper fayre)  
And to this castle is this iourney spent,  
Where I must leaue him to his fortunes fare,  
But still imagine that he forward went,  
For strongest loue imprints a deepest care,  
That nothing can withdraw his hearts intent;  
But let him goe as fast as loue him driues,  
He ouertake him ere he home ariues,

CANT.

# Vertues Historie.

## CANT. 6.

Eronaes craft and filed tang,  
And pleasing looke and flattring face,  
Deogines his heart hath stung;  
Aidon doth finde in wofull case,  
His mother kept in bondage chaine,  
In whose defence himselfe is slaine.

**T**Hou sacred Muse which with thy siluer spring,  
A little sprinklest my scarfe-moystned brow,  
Helpe me in ampler field my verse to bring,  
These deedes doe grow to larger number now,  
Nor can this little pipe them fully sing,  
Therefore my limits with my song must grow:  
The diuers webs are now so diuers spunne,  
They cannot end so neere as they begunne.

Whither defiled soules thus runne ye mad?  
Wallowing in filthy shames sinck most obscene:  
What? see you not how *Adrastia* sad,  
With iron whips inflicting hellish peine,  
Still houereth ouer, marking what is bad,  
And like *Celano* clasps her wings vncleane,  
For ioy that she a subiect fit hath found,  
On whom reuengement deeply may rebound.

This if *Erona* had considered than,  
When she first yeelded her to sinnes delight,  
And drawne her feete againe when she began,  
This sorrow had not vext her troubled spright,  
Now desolate left off that cursed man:  
But since none other way is found in fight,  
Vnto her wonted arte she runnes againe,  
And modestie in poysoned heart dothaine.

F

After



## *Vertues Historie.*

After the castle was left desolate,  
And all betooke them to that wicked way,  
Faine would she after goe but tis too late,  
So shall her sleights appeare as bright as day,  
Therefore she doth inuent all desperate,  
This path or none for helping to assay,  
All clad in black like mourning for the dead,  
Or Pilgrim that is all disquieted.

A hood of black vpon her head she wore,  
Which fought against the Sunne her forme to shield,  
And on her backe a mourning gowne she bore,  
Which loosely flagging swept the verdant field,  
And at her brest a booke there hung before,  
Whose backe nor painting clad nor golde did guild;  
But black it was without and so within,  
Onely the letters white in all were seen.

Thus is the Ancres gone to seeke her fate,  
Clad in the cloudes of sorrow and despayre,  
Which to eclipse these rayes which shinde of late;  
Yet in this battell of her bewties fayre,  
Opposde to blacke this white supports more state,  
Which litle teary dimples doe repayre;  
So that or now, or neuer so diuine,  
Doth this fayre *Cynthia* at her fullest shine.

So long she had the playnes and valleys tras't,  
That *Phæbus* gallopt downe the western hill,  
Seeing his fierie torches so to wast,  
And she then hoping for no lesser ill,  
Then in some outcast harbour farre displas't,  
To lye, while night keeps all in silent still;  
Goes forward seeking for some shady place,  
To hide her from the view of mens disgrace.

But

## *Vertues Historie.*

But see an aged man this way doth ride,  
Vpon a lusty Palfrey sayrely set,  
Who though his hayres in ages graine are dyde,  
Proues that his heart the mastery doth get,  
And that some heate within his breast doth bide,  
Not full remou'd from out his wonted seat,  
Euen to this damsell is he come at last  
Whence fiery dartes into his eyes are cast.

Sometimes he lookes, yet straight lookes back againe,  
Sorry his heart should be captiu'd with loue,  
Sometimes he viewes yet not to view doth fayne,  
He fix'th his eyes, yet streight he doth remoue,  
His thoughts be gone, yet thoughts he would restraine,  
Which battle in his flaming brest doth proue:  
That though he fight and striue with his desire,  
Dry sticks must needes consume once put to fire.

Faine would he passe, but burning loue denyes,  
And makes him see he strives against his heart,  
Therefore this medicine he now applyes,  
And hopes to win his loue by loues desert,  
He doth enquire which way her iourney lyes,  
And if her busines binds not to depart:  
Euen neere (quoth he) my castle sayre doth stand,  
Which shall be ready at thy sweet command.

She then replies a pilgrim mayde I am,  
And finnes deepe spot farre buried in my brest,  
Tells me I neuer can cleane purge the same,  
Except I banish quite the bodies rest,  
Which still prouokes the soule to endlesse shame,  
But for this profer and your kinde request,  
One night with you sayre friend I may remaine,  
So in the morne I shall returne againe.



## Vertues Historie.

Even as the baited hooke in Thamis waues,  
Floeth along and swimmeth fast away,  
As if no gainfull hinderance he craues,  
And when the fish his guilefull course doth stay,  
Playing a while his tangled life he saues,  
But at the last he takes him for a pray:  
So doth this mayd seeme careles for her gaine,  
But he shall feele her craft to greater paine.

This Knight now widow'd had a comely wife,  
Whose fayrenes with his fierceness badly met,  
The chastest Vestall liu'd no chaster life  
Then did this Lady, yet he still did fret,  
A strangers looke would set them both at strife,  
He thinks she doth her vowed loue forget,  
Which made her weary of her prison'd breath,  
And with a sword her soule vnburdeneth.

Her ghost embrued in that crimson gore,  
Still plaines to *Rhadamant* with ceaseles cry,  
For fierce reuenge to make him once deplore,  
That wrought her that accursed misery,  
Who deeply moued, wild her weepe no more,  
And bad reuenge vnto the earth to fly:  
Where he should get him still desired food,  
Of cruell torments and new issuing blood.

Now hath he got this fained penitent,  
To play the pageant of his plotted ill,  
Who though she seemeth inly to repent,  
Yet sinnes *abyssus* there remaineth still,  
The filthy dregges of shame whose noysome sent,  
VVith poysoned humors shall her louer fitt:  
But since his heart a woing needes must goe,  
He leaue him to his woing and his wee.

Now

## Vertues Historie.

Now change thy Myrtle for a Cypresse bow,  
Put on thy mourning weedes, come mourne my Muse,  
VVith Ebon dye vailing thy smiling brow,  
Loth would I tell it, yet I cannot chuse,  
And tis too late to helpe thy losses now,  
Floods of my teares cannot thy ioy reduce:  
Ah good Sir *Aidon* whose vntimely fate,  
Makes me to mourne euen fast by pleasures gate.

After this Knight returnde with victorie,  
Into the country where he first was borne,  
It chanced as he did arrive full nie  
His castle, day was fled, and double horne  
Of *Cynthia* gan aduance their tops full hie,  
VVhen wearines their limmes had much forworne,  
And the Sunnes scorching (now ore-passed heate)  
VVith labour made their panting hearts to beate.

But now a Christal well they haue espide,  
In whose cleere streames beauties sayre looking glasse,  
*Phæbe*, when in her circuit she did ride,  
VVould ioy to see the glorie of her face,  
VVhere they alight, and by the fountaine side  
Doe lay them downe vpon the pleasant grasse:  
And while they harke how *Zephire* soft doth sing,  
A murmur to their eares these words doth bring.

You goodly boughs of youth which proudly beare  
Your climbing tops vnto the smiling ayre,  
Thinke how fierce winter shall your garments teare,  
And with his stormes ore-shadow all your sayre,  
The goodliest vesture which you ere shall weare,  
Times aged feathers basely shall impayre,  
Your ioy the mornings smile, but sable night  
Shall drowne in sorrowes floods your most delight.



## *Vertues Historie.*

The worlds great pride shall haue a greater fall,  
Vncertaine men haue no possession sure,  
He that is neereſt death is beſt of all,  
The leſſer troubles hath he to endure,  
He that doth ſit attirde in princely pall,  
Cannot the purchase of one day procure;  
When our ioyes Sunne from *Tetbis* waues doth wade,  
Tis ſigne there was, and ſhall againe be ſhade.

Therefore thou body which doſt pine away,  
VVhich age hath furrow'd with his iron plow,  
Reioyce that thou ſhalt ſee that glorions day,  
VVhoſe bright Sunnes Chariot ſhall not downward bow,  
But lighten beames which black night doth obay,  
So chaine ſhe neuer can from darkenes glow;  
And while thou draweſt this thy fainting breath,  
VVeepe for to waſh thy finnes, not for thy death.

This mournfull voyce with hoarſe and hollow ſound,  
Sayled full gently to their liſtning eares,  
VVhoſe noyſe that did from out the caue rebound,  
Brought to their ſtonied hearts affrighting feares,  
At laſt by earneſt thought the Knight hath found,  
VVhat wracked wight this dolefull muſick beares;  
And knew that this his mother deare had beene,  
Griewing her woe, and not her ſelfe is ſcene.

Diſtracted quight about the place he goes,  
Like *Bacchus* prieſts whom holy *Thyrſe* had raught,  
But now the ſound with crying he doth loſe,  
And with the ſound the place ſo much he ſaught,  
But then he thinks ſome wicked forraine foes,  
His caſtle haue and her both captiue caught:  
Therefore vnto the Caſtle he doth flie,  
As one intranced in an extaſie.

He

## *Vertues Historie.*

He fiercely knocks against the castle gate,  
He knocks againe as fury doth him driue,  
At last one comes, and cryes who dares thus late  
VVith troubling noyse hither to ariue :  
No sooner saw he him, but vrgde with hate,  
(VVith which his passions doe all vainely strue)  
He with a mighty blow stroke at his head,  
Thinking euen then t'haue sent his soule to bed.

The other voyding drew his fiery blade,  
And here (quoth he) goe to thy mothers ghost,  
His mothers loued name such entry made,  
As he for thought thereof gan faint almost,  
In which deepe traunce he doth the Knight inuade,  
And stroke him deeply to the vtmost cost :  
Downe falls the Knight as if he dead had bin,  
The other left him so and entred in.

After *Viceina* softly followeth,  
At last she comes, where she doth weeping view  
The mournfull picture of vngentle death :  
Nor doth she looke vpon his plight to rue,  
But with a linnen closely couereth  
The wound, and doth a litle life renew ;  
VVhere helped by the stopping of his blood,  
He went with her vnto a ioyning wood.

Yet knowes he not how this vngentle deede  
VVas wrought, nor who abusde his mothers right ;  
It was a bloody man that did excede  
In furious wrath, each word would make him fight :  
Yet mighty was he, and his happy speede  
Causde him of any foes to make but light :  
And still his iawes like smoaky *Orcus* caue,  
VVould reeke forth othes when he did curse and raue.

This



## *Vertues Historie.*

This furious *Ajax* when the drowfie night  
Had couerd all things with her pitchy vaile,  
Comes to this castle where he doth alight,  
And cries for entry, but his cry doth faile :  
Then swelling deepe with rage and great despight,  
The gates with violence he doth assaile:  
VVhich broken downe, he takes the sleeping Nun,  
And shuts her in a caue, and roules a stone vpon.

But now good *Aidon* like the dying swan,  
Knew that the time of death approached neere :  
Therefore to sing sweet tunes he now began,  
The tunes which please the great Creators eare,  
The cruell fates haue burnt the liuely bran,  
VVith whose consuming breath and life doth weare  
Cruell *Althea*, death rest of vnrest,  
Leauing the earth-wormes carrying hence the best.

But as his eyes had almost rolde the last,  
To him his mothers shadow doth appeare,  
Quoth she ; reioyce thou soule worlds woe is past,  
This burden now no longer shalt thou beare,  
Our liues account in heauens booke is cast,  
Throw hence earths cloake, and follow me my deare:  
This heard, he fixth his standing eyes on hye,  
His winged ghost to heauens bower doth flye.

As fayre *Crensa* in consumed *Troy*,  
Fled from *Aeneas* listd in the ayre,  
Rauisht with heauens ouer-pleasing ioy,  
And left him crying in his loues despayre,  
Freed from these troubles and the worlds annoy,  
So hath this ghost now set in starry chayre,  
Left her that with the shrilnes of her cry,  
Pierced resisting ayre and stroake the sky.

The

## *Vertues Historie.*

The greatest woe that heart did ever beare,  
With grisly tallants gripeth on her soule,  
Sorrow her inward parts doth fiercely teare,  
And in griefes couer doth her heart enroule,  
And when the least relenting doth appeare,  
Then doth deaths vilmomie her peace controule:  
The Sunne of loue hath set her heart on fire,  
The smoake is sighs, the flame is her desire.

As when in open field a mounting flame,  
Halfe-quenched with the clowdes distilling raine,  
Doubles anon his height, and with the same  
Yeelds foorth fresh vapours to the clowdes againe,  
Till they ore-burdned send them whence they came,  
Rebating so th' aspiring fire aaine:  
So sighs and teares runne still this weeping source,  
And end themselves, but neuer end their course.

Strike rocky soule (quoth she) a teary showre,  
From out the hollow of my stony breast,  
And all thy moysture into riuers powre,  
For him that did procure thy sweetest rest,  
And melt in teares vntill thy latest howre,  
Because thy dearest Deare is now deceast:  
Then to a Cypresse tree thy shadow turne,  
And on his tombe shew that thou still dost mourne.

*Alluding to  
Cyparissus.*

While thou thrice-blessed soule in happy peace,  
Shalt sing sweet accents rauishing concent,  
In tunes whose harmony shall neuer cease,  
But still endure with thy still-during seate,  
While nothing shall my heart from griefe release,  
Till with my woe my life shall be expleate:  
Fayre dayes shall tell me of thy sayrest hue,  
And cloudy gloome shall bid me euer rue.

G

*This*



## *Vertues Historie.*

This sayd, a shade encompass all the wood,  
Her darkned sight abroad can nothing see:  
So by *Lyrcean* groue sayre *Jo* stood,  
Enuellop'd with a shadie Canopee,  
While she thus masked in this pitchie hood,  
Was forst the great gods concubine to bee:  
But at the last at once this cloudy night  
Is chased by the Sunnes new rising light.

But where before that Sainted Temple lay,  
Nothing appeares, and where the blood did staine,  
The dyed grasse, there now sayre *Roses* stay,  
The damaske colourd in a ruddie graine,  
That blusheth at the rising of the day,  
To see her beautie naked all remaine:  
And purple violets ne'er growing right,  
But seeke to hide their forme from common sight,

Thus is the Mother and her holy Sonne,  
The truest types of chastitie and shame,  
Dead ere new offspring from their loynes begunne,  
To propagate sayre vertues sacred name:  
Which is the reason that th'all-seeing Sonne,  
Seldome hath scene a chaste and spoiles Dame:  
Except *Eliza* that celestially wight,  
And you whose tapers burne pure virgin-light.

But sayre *Viceina* now doth walke alone,  
Faine would I bring thee to some lodging place,  
For curtesie denies to heare thee moane,  
And thus to leaue thee in this wofull case,  
Forsaken and accompanide of none:  
But take it not I pray thee for disgrace,  
I see some riding here with might and maine,  
He but examine them and come againe.

CANT.

# Vertues Historie.

## CANT. 7.

Adonia goes t'auenge her Knight,  
After her charming nought preuailes:  
Deogin seeing Erona light,  
Amidst the waues his chance bewailes:  
Erona on the sea doth float,  
Chang'd by a charme into a boat.

**W**Hen in th' *Aegeum* of thy wandring dayes,  
Fortune full softly filis thy swelling saile,  
Let no *Circeas* hinder quite thy wayes,  
Nor let her cups against thy heart preuaile,  
Then vertue of thy spotted soule decayes,  
Blinded in worldly pleasures cloudy vaile:  
This pleasing draught shall so bewitch thy will,  
Well mayst thou see the good, but doe the ill.

Which doth appeare in this most wretched wight,  
Who after *Asdon* had their Captaine slaine,  
Returneth to the dregges of fond delight,  
Hoping t'haue found their carpet knight againe,  
And bring her ancient customes new to light:  
But as she sought him with incessant paine,  
At last a mangled carcasse she had spide,  
With skarlet blood and filthie gore bedide.

As *Peleus* daughters, when they saw their sire  
Vanisht from earth into a gastly shade,  
Their raging thoughts rapt vp in furies gire,  
Curst heauen and earth, and that life-loofing blade,  
Damning that vgly witch to *Orcus* fire,  
And then themselues which first the motion made:  
So doth this furnace burning hellish flame,  
Breath curses gainst great heau'ns fate-ruling name.

*Medea.*



## *Vertues Historie.*

Foule fiends(quothe)which gnash your fletting iawes,  
Enuying at mens dying felicitie,  
Goe, heeres a subiect for your rending clawes,  
Ascend to heauen and raze his hatefull eye,  
That bloody Sunne which with his influence drawes  
The tossed ship of life to miserie:  
With sulphure smoake darken each quenched starre,  
Which could behold this bloody act so farre.

And on your Dragon backs lift *Neptune* hye,  
Into the heauens with his watrie traine,  
That downe perpetuall showers still may flye,  
The fates vngentle power to complaine:  
Let earth decay, let all things earthly dye,  
Till with their moanes my loue returne againe:  
Innest thee here ayr-ouerspredding Night,  
Now he is dead, all is none other light.

And take you vestures which black *Strixes* waue,  
Seuen times hath dyed in his sable flood,  
And let each starre a pitchy garment haue,  
And let these suits attire all heauens brood,  
Where in a progresse they shall mourning craue,  
The deare renewing of this blessed blood,  
And breake the distaffe of death-guiding fate,  
Loosing the soules from out hell prison gate.

But looke, the Sunne sends downe his smiling rayes,  
Laughing to scorne the sorrow of my heart,  
Words cannot bring him to his sweetest dayes,  
No power pities my tormenting smart:  
Therefore Ile try some soule-inchanting wayes,  
Whose might shall make the fates their doome reuart:  
And since they moue not with my mourning teares,  
With deadly charmes Ile pearce their glowing eares.

Seuen

## *Vertues Historie.*

Seuen dayes she mournd about her dearest loue,  
The seuenth night she wandred farre away,  
And all the sorts of liuely herbes did proue,  
Gathering the dew from leaues of springing bay,  
And all the spices which might calour moue,  
And Serpents skin which summer last did lay:  
Only she could not get a Deeres warme hart,  
Whose want confounded all her charming art.

Now back she goes, when as the wakened Sunne  
Gathred his horses from the Westerne plaine,  
And softly vp the Easterne mount did runne,  
When she vnto her Knight returnde againe,  
Where, when in order all her charme was done,  
She loosth about her head her tressie traine:  
And laying in his mouth, and in his wound,  
Her charme she runneth seuen times around.

Then seuen times these words she doth repeate,  
By the great secrets which in *Memphis* lie,  
And by the bloody waues which *Pharus* beate,  
By three-formd *Hecates* great Deitie,  
By pitchy *Stixes* heauen-feared seate,  
And by the labours of thy Lunacie:  
*Phæbe* recur'd by *Temesaan* brasse,  
I charge this soule to come where first it was.

This sayd, a Christall glasse she foorth doth take,  
Holding it right against the shining Sunne,  
That beames contracted might a fire make,  
Whose smoake into a liuely soule might runne:  
The charme is kindled and he seemes to wake,  
But wanting force the charme is straight vndone:  
She did but trouble his affrighted ghost,  
Lacking the thing which helpe *Medea* most.



## *Vertues Historie.*

Now sits she downe, all helpe and hope is gone,  
Reuenge can only now his soule acquite :  
Therefore on vengeance she doth thinke alone,  
To be reuenged on that holy Knight:  
And as she plots she spies an armed one,  
Ready prepar'd as seem'd for bloody fight;  
His loftie speare he doth aduance on hie,  
As though he menac'd warre vnto the skie.

This pecocke iron'd thus of euery side,  
A coward is vnfit of manly speare,  
Neuer in ought he hath his valour tride,  
But is so faint and humble slaue to feare,  
That when the shadow of his lance he spide,  
His fainting carcasle downward gan to beare :  
And if deaths thought had not him rous'd away,  
No doubt for famine he should there decay.

And now he went into this filthie land,  
Where Knights but seldome vsde their prowesse trie,  
And now the mayd of him doth this demaund,  
That sharpe reuenge might quite this iniurie :  
Then lifting out his vow confirming hand,  
Lady (if this same caitife hidden lie  
Vnder the compasse of this emptie ayre)  
This hand thy losses fully shall repayre.

Out in *Tartaria* when a mightie hoast  
Encompast me : but then bespoke the mayd,  
No further of thy deedes I pray thee boast,  
Well doe I trust thee for thy gentle ayd,  
Though he had neuer been in any coast,  
Which in a new Meridian is layd :  
But trauerfing the Iland vp and downe,  
Neuer did worthie deed in field nor towne.

The

## *Vertues Historie.*

The mayd vp mounted led him in the way,  
Which to Sir *Aidons* fort directly brought:  
Where come by breaking of the blushing day,  
He bid the mayd stay back till he had fought,  
The battell which her foes in dust should lay:  
Which done, he very studious bethought,  
How he the battell any way might flie,  
Or if he fought, some place of flight espie.

Thus musing straight he sees the portall shut,  
And hoping none were remanent within,  
With speare he gaue the gates a mightie butt,  
And cryes, what are you fled for feare your sinne,  
Reueng'd with death my hungry speare should glut?  
Or of my comming haue forewarned bin?  
Then forth *Tigranes* comes that furious Knight,  
And cryes, what peasant troubles my delight.

No harme (quoth he) forsooth an humble friend,  
Come to congratulate your victorie,  
And here this captiue mayd a pledge doe send,  
Yeelding her to you with humilitie:  
Let not I pray my boldnes you offend,  
But take this mayd a pledge of fealtie.  
The Knight appeasde, them gently entertaind,  
And they a place of rest haue now obtaind.

Now had *Vicina* past this bloody seat,  
And wandred thorow way-lesse woods and dales,  
VVhen in a vale a cottage she hath met,  
VVherein a Hermite still in prayer calles,  
To clense his soule and wickednesse forget,  
VVhose thought the thoughts of his sweet conscience galls:  
Thus did he spend the day and watch the night,  
Still listing vp for grace his troubled spright.

VVho



## *Vertues Historie.*

Who seeing such a modest Lady by,  
Told her if cottage might not be disdaind,  
Nor herball sate which in his house doth ly,  
Of him she gladly should be entertaind:  
Who finding comfort of extremity,  
Told him she gladly hath his lodging gaind:  
VVhere we will leaue them to their hearty prayer,  
And old mindes griefes with ioy new to repayre.

But see how fayre *Erroma* chang'th her coat,  
And taught the seigniour with a cleerer breast,  
To sing his tunes vnto a higher note:  
She that but one night in his house would rest,  
Least wicked sinne her holy soule should blot,  
She thinks to tarie here is farre the best:  
And *Deogin* enamourd on her face,  
VVith many sports hath made her like the place.

But he is come vnto his wonted rate,  
His eyes are euer glistering with fire,  
He euer thinks she hath another mate,  
And other loues doe kindle her desire,  
VVhich often causeth strife and great debate,  
But she will gently quite her ielous fire:  
And since he stumbles thus without a stone,  
She meanes to giue him rocks to fall one.

Euen by this Castle *Neptune* once in loue  
Of a wood Nymph, did follow fast his game:  
But she to fly his kisses mainly strove,  
And to her woods of harbour flying came:  
*Neptune* enrag'd, his trident mace vphoue,  
And mainly stroake the harbour of the Dame:  
The earth gan melt, and trees consum'd away,  
*Neptune* rusht in and caught the swimming lay.

## *Vertues Historie.*

So now a lake it is, once firmeſt land,  
And Knights much vſe to croſſe this watry way :  
But once arriu'd a Knight vnto the ſtrand,  
About the darkning of the conquerd day,  
And at this caſtle lodging did demand:  
The carle was loth, but threatnings did affray,  
That in he goes into that burning gate,  
The tragick actor of the churles fate.

When ſupper comes all doe themſelues addreſſe,  
To ſaciate with foode their natures neede :  
But this grim ſir doth ſit all ſupperleſſe,  
And on his gnawed guts ſpace doth feede,  
And when he eates, he mindeth nothing leſſe :  
For on the Knight his eyes kept carefull heede,  
That ſometimes when his meate he ſhould deuide,  
The knife awry into his fleſh doth ſlide.

Thus paſſeth forth the prologue of his woe,  
But the next morne brings forth his tragedie :  
For that ſame Knight his wife had handled ſo,  
That in a chamber now they both doe lie :  
But ſtill *Deogines* goes to and fro,  
To ſee if he his louing mates can ſpie :  
At laſt he ſees the flame whoſe fry dart  
Kindles the ſulphure of his ſueld hart.

About he runnes and cryes I burne I burne,  
And in black famine all his bones doth ſpend :  
At laſt vnto the riuer he doth turne,  
Thinking to giue this flame a watry end :  
But he ſo light is growne, each waue doth ſpurne,  
And any way his ſliding courſe doth bend :  
At laſt ſayre ſayling with a Northerne blaſt,  
This barebond ſeend on *Britains* ſands was caſt.

H

But



## *Vertues Historie.*

But now *Erona* will her course betake,  
As she was wont to lust and filthie shame;  
A whirry on that riuer she doth make,  
And she her selfe the passenger became,  
Ferrying each knight vpon that gulfie lake,  
That condescends vnto her damned game:  
The rest by cunning of her ioynted boat,  
She layes in waues and makes ore-bord to float.

For in two parts her boat she doth deuide,  
She in the first doth row, and that behinde  
VVith a sleight vise vnto the first is ride,  
VVhich with a pin she can both loose and binde:  
Now while vpon the waues they rowing slide,  
If any Knight resist her filthie minde,  
Then doth she loose her pin, he falleth downe,  
And drenching waues his haples carkasse drowne.

If he vnto her dalliance doe yeeld,  
Then doth she passe him safely to the land,  
And gently sets him on the other field:  
And thus her dayes consum'd like dustie sand,  
VVhich *Boreas* to and fro with blasts doth wield,  
And is not scene where it before did stand:  
So doth her body so her soule consume,  
Dide vgly black in finnes still-reaking fume.

Nor doth her guilt escape vnpunisht quite;  
For as it fell this way her Captaine came,  
Old *Bonaualant*, once her deare delight,  
But now new-changed in another frame:  
VVho when she ferried, and with pleasing sight  
Wou'd to agree to deeds of black defame:  
He harkned not to her vntam'd desire,  
VVhich kindled in her breast reuenges fire.

But

## *Vertues Historie.*

But he had spide how she with turning vice  
VVas loosing downe the dead-fall of her hate,  
And with a charme did crosse her first deuice,  
Giuing her punisht soule a new-found fate;  
Into a boat her breast, her legs, her thighs  
Are chang'd, and bound by charme for endles date:  
That since she had delighted still to carrie,  
Here in eternall carriage she should tarrie.

Her armes the oares do cut the fleeting sea,  
And passe each traoueller to the furtherd side:  
Her face in which sweet beautie once did play,  
The plowed waues in furrowes doth deuide:  
So the Propæties that common lay,  
And passers violence did still abide,  
Because their face no ruddie shame could print,  
VVere turned to a neuer blushing flint.

But let me quickly to *Doledra* flie,  
Vnles I thither make the greater hie,  
*Fidamon* homeward doth so hasty hie,  
That all the mariage will be ouer-past,  
The feast and triumphs of his victorie,  
And tilts vnto their latest day will waft:  
But I will after on my thoughts swift wing,  
And in triumphing tunes his trophées sing.



# Vertues Historie.

## CANT. 8.

Fidamour from th' Inchanter fled,  
With fayre Doledraes King doth fight:  
She victor doth her foe behead,  
And to Eumorphostakes her flight,  
Where at the marriage suddenly,  
Th' Inchanter downe to bell doth fly.

**A**S when Iones lightning on a towre doth fall,  
No humour can allay his fry might,  
But with his hungrie iawes consumeth all,  
On which his rending tallands can alight:  
So doth this filthie flame vnnaturall,  
Burne in this witches heart in hearts despight:  
His thoughts like water in Pyracmons forge,  
Make his fire-breathing throte more flames disgorge,

When in the castle all the night was spent;  
In morne they hasted to depart away,  
Which deeply wrought th' inchanters discontent,  
And by these meanes doth seeke their course delay:  
He takes a potion from Cocytus sent,  
Whose force in weakned heart deepe loue will lay:  
This had he mingled in some fatall wine,  
Hoping to make her heart in furie pine.

But Epimel her carefull watching page,  
(Which still about his mistris did attend)  
Had spide the witches faithles cariage,  
And quickly bad her on her steed ascend:  
She kindled with disdaine and mightie rage,  
Vnto Doledra now her course doth bend:  
Where come, without in suburbs she doth stay,  
And to Phucerus thence sends mortall fray.

The

## *Vertues Historie.*

The king that neuer thought in open fight,  
He and his kingdome should be ouerthrowne:  
But that some mayd would by her subtile flight,  
Or other policie vndermine his throne,  
Went foorth full fraught with rage and high despight:  
And though his loues about him still did mone,  
And curtizans about him euer cry,  
The sad euent of wofull flight to fly.

Yet he respected not their vaine request,  
But marched foorth to meete this warlike Dame:  
And at his sight she kindling in her breast,  
The Pyramis of an ascending flame,  
Straight open enmitie to him profest,  
And with well couched lance toward her came:  
Their flashing speares that from their breasts rebound,  
Made eccho tell the horror of the sound.

The flintie flakes drop from the riuen plate,  
And make the hollow earth from deepe to grone,  
Whose noyse the trembling spirits did amate,  
Fearing their couering would haue salne vpon:  
So angry *Ioue* inflam'd with ruthles hate,  
Darts from the heau'ns a mightie thunderstone,  
And in his rage from out a clowd doth rore,  
That *Atlas* limmes doe quake which heau'n vpbore.

But at the first encounter deeply fell  
On *Fidamours* left side a heauy blow,  
Which wofull newes vnto her heart did tell:  
But at the next she him requited so,  
His soule was waisted halfe the way to hell,  
And made his conquerd corps her valour know:  
Whom from his palfrey sayrely she vpheau'd,  
And of the greeting earth a kisse receiu'd.



## *Vertues Historie.*

The feeble soule from out his breast was fled,  
Wandering through gloomy wayes of hellish shade,  
While with her sword she martyreth his head:  
The ensigne which her victorie displaide,  
And with her louing page she homewards sped.  
But what great ioy this ouerthrow hath made,  
Let them declare who doe their loue obtaine,  
This pleasure in my heart did neare remaine.

Goe whistling winds with easie murmuring bring  
This happy Lady to her hearts desire,  
And all the way let sweetest musick sing,  
Melodious concent in loue-carols by her,  
And goe my thoughts thorow sliding ayre fling,  
And view the heat of her deepe printed fire:  
Burne not your selues, nor come the flame too nie,  
*Icarus* once drown'd can teach you how to flie.

Thus in triumphing to *Eumorphus* brought,  
All doe applaud the fortune of his fight:  
The ransome which they still before had sought,  
To free them from *Phucerus* foule despight:  
But sudden ioy so much his Lady raught,  
Her heart drew exhalations of delight,  
Which kindled by her loue enkindled flame  
Vnto her Knight, as darted Sunbeames came.

She giues him kisses, pledges of her heart,  
Sweeter then *Ioue* receiues of *Ganymed*,  
While them betweene sweet Nectar downe doth moue,  
The hony dew with which sayre loue is fed:  
Such is the billing of the Cyprian doue,  
Their mouths in others mouth emprisoned:  
But she with talke loosing that rosiall binde,  
Drew back her lips, but left her heart behinde.

Now

## *Vertues Historie.*

Now all things for the Mariage are prepar'd,  
As when great *Perseus* married *Andromede*,  
No cost nor any ornament is spar'd,  
With which the mariage may be beautifide :  
No Knight nor commor is from hence debard,  
To see the band which shall these louers wed :  
Shine bright sweet Sunne, now comes that happy day,  
That in the port these gladfull loues shall lay.

Now for that holy Hermite haue they sent,  
With whom *Viceina* all this while hath stayd,  
Who both inuited to *Eumorphos* went,  
Where stands the Knight and that diuineft mayd,  
Ready to be conioynd with one consent :  
The Hermite many holy prayers sayd,  
While fayre *Viceina* by the payre doth stand,  
And holds a torch in her ambrosiall hand.

But *Bonauallant*, whom ny fortie yeares  
With foule *Geticas* date had neere opprest,  
Thought ere he went to hurt these faithfull pheares,  
And with his charmes to trouble holy rest :  
But when this Hermites godly speech he heares,  
His charmes are frustrate and enchaunting ceast,  
Thus in despite of enuies stormy wrath,  
These loues are setled in their quiets path.

Now all things for the tilting ready are,  
And many Knights are gatherd from about,  
And fierce *Tigranes* hitherward doth fare :  
But poore *Anander* wraps a filthie clout  
About his hand, and sayes this cloth he ware,  
Because a wound hath pearc'd his hand throughout:  
But he receiu'd no wound in field nor fight,  
This is his cowardise accustom'd flight.

He



## *Vertues Historie.*

He with *Tigranes* comes vnto the feast,  
But saies he cannot runne for grieuous paine :  
*Tigranes* doth belecue the cowards iest,  
And with him comes vnto the tilting plaine,  
Where stood two Knights with ready speares in rest  
To try who could most valours glorie gaine :  
They runne and fairely breake each others speare,  
And throughly passe as if no let there were.

After runne many whose part youthfull heat,  
Drew to expresse the fire of their heart :  
Others whom loue taught in this warlike fear,  
To proue before their Ladies loues desert :  
As if in telling how their loue was great,  
They begd some easing of impatient smart,  
Which with emprezaes they doe fairely shew,  
Fitting their outward to their inward hew.

One hath a Salamander in the fire,  
The word vpon fayre beautie is the flame :  
The next a Linnet in a cage of wire,  
The mot my prisond thoughts still sing the same,  
To shew the firmnes of his chaste desire :  
The third, small birds that to the fire came,  
The saying there conioynd : my light my night,  
To shew he pines consum'd with beauties light.

Thus most had tride their valour and their might,  
And to *Anander* all are come anon,  
Desiring him to doe the Mariage right,  
And that his fame and credit stood thereon,  
To proue him selfe a stout and valiant knight,  
And not in looking let the time be gone :  
For they perceiu'd not yet his cowardise,  
Thoughts are not knowen certaine by the eyes.

*Anander*

## Vertues Historie.

*Anander* thus beset as blind of night,  
Compass with smaller soules in time of day,  
Began to rub his pulse and pluck his spright,  
And closely puls his winding cloth away,  
(Quoth he) I stay not for I feare their fight,  
For thousands by this right hand conquered lay.  
But with my valiance to conclude the iust,  
A thing not ending well, is laide in dust.

Now is he on a gallant Palfrey plaste,  
And ready to encounter with his foe:  
The other Knight (good Knight too much debast  
With coward braggart to encounter so)  
Spurring with speare in rest toward him past,  
But forth he empty to the ende doth go,  
For good *Anander* meaneth harme to none,  
But forth another way in haste is gone.

When first the Courser gan to lift his feete,  
He shuts his locked eyes with all his might;  
And with his spurres amaine the horse doth greeke:  
The Palfrey blindly driven and vnright,  
Makes him vnwares, with speare a wall to meete,  
With whose rebut stands vp the horse on hight,  
Downe on the earth his carcasse doth rebound,  
And layde his crauen combe along the ground.

The Knight enraged with his foule disgrace,  
Tolde to *Tigranes* t'was no knightly part,  
To bring such cowards and the iusts deface;  
Who rending open earths disseuerd hart,  
Catching pale *Stix* by her infected face,  
(Quoth he) by *Erebs* wife no Knight thou art,  
That doest impute his cowardise to mee,  
Which nere before few dayes his face did see.

I

Then



## *Vertues Historie.*

Then drawing out his not returning blade,  
He thought at first his heart to deerely pay:  
But well defended it no entry made;  
The other with like load on him doth lay,  
That each began to reele as ill apayde,  
And each againe doth straight renew the fray:  
Their swordes true schollers in this martiall fight,  
Answer each others arguments aright.

As *Vulcanes* seruants in the *Lemnian* caue,  
VVith restles blowes doe frame a thunderbolt,  
Or hammering for *Ioue* an iron claue,  
VVith mightie terror shake their groaning holt,  
So these fierce Knights, one at another draue,  
Nor from their kindled fury will reuolt:  
But thundring each vpon the others crefts,  
VVrite with their swords the raging of their breasts.

But loe a trumpet roares with hollow sound,  
And deadly skreeches breath from out below:  
VWhich doe their cooled soules with feare astownd  
To heare such dumpish notes so gastly blow:  
But now the cause thereof they trembling found,  
Twere winged spirits which from *Orcus* flow,  
Sent by the king of hell to apprehend  
That charming thiefe, and cite him to his end.

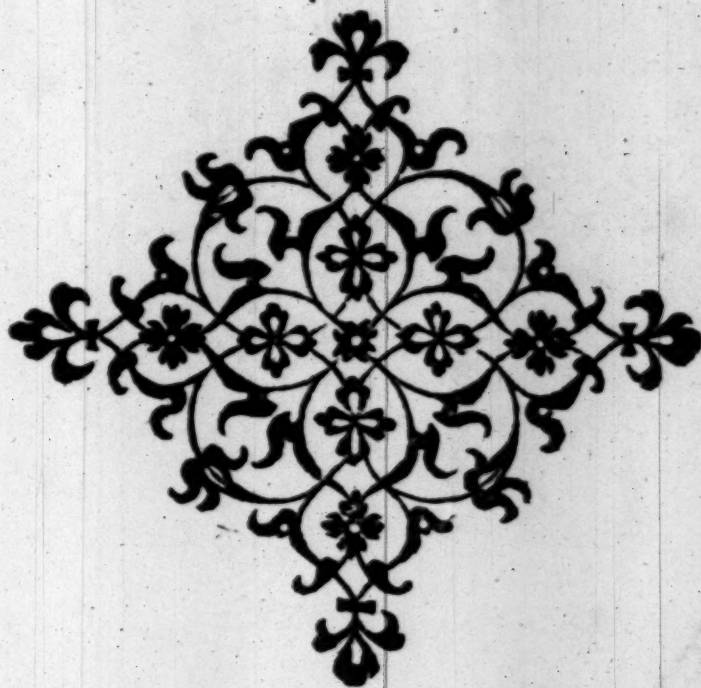
Full fortie yeares are past, while here he lookes,  
And careles viewes these warriors martiall deedes,  
But *Pluto* sees his name within his bookes,  
And to the fiends his doome and iudgement reedes,  
VVho breaking from the cloudy smoaking nookes,  
VVhose breath the soule with during torment feedes,  
Ceaze on his backe, and gripe him with their clawes,  
And teares him with their iron-rancked iawes.

Out

## *Vertues Historie.*

Out breathes he curses gainst the starry sky,  
Tearing high *Ioue* with his still-gnashing teeth,  
And execrates all mens felicity:  
Hating the light, and cursing all he seeth:  
Thus banning in this furious extasy,  
Vnto the seate of damned soules he fleeth:  
The wounded earth hells entralls doth vashroude,  
Downe sinkes his soule, maskt in a smoaky cloude.

*The ende of the first Booke.*





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19  
THVLE,

Or  
*Vertues Historie.*

To the Honorable and vertuous Mistris  
AMY AVDELY.

By F. R.

*The second Booke.*



*At London*  
Printed by Felix Kingston, for  
Humfrey Lownes.

1598.





The Prologue vnto the  
second Booke.

**T**Hus farre my lowly Muse in course aray,  
Shewes the least riches of her treasury;  
And in the plainer tearmes she doth assay,  
To please the eares of popularity.

Now shall she tread one litle step aboue,  
For those whose itching eares are neuer fild:  
But with the thunder of almighty Ioue,  
And tales how Giants daring armes did wield.

Yet not so high, though higher then the rest,  
Contents me in the Sea beare lowly sayle,  
VVith litle barke, least canuas fittest best,  
That can with lesser might gainst tide preuayle.  
But when to greater seats she shall aspire;  
Then may she boldly sing great Phlegraes fire.

CANT.

# Vertues Historie.

## CANT. I.

*The tyrant Aimaran oppres'd the iust,  
Whose miseries reuenge doth soone acquite,  
That basely layes his honour in the dust:  
And curtains vp his names obscured light,  
While Bdellaes walks downe to the earth are borne,  
Whose haughty tops did kisse the skie beforne.*

**O**F bloody gusts, and those vermillion swordes,  
VVhich didd themselves in Brothers broken hearts,  
How swimming blood in streets made flowing fords,  
And ruthfull turmoyles rose in diuers parts  
I meane to sing: That fury which affords  
Sighs to the sad, and peare'th with Ebon darts:  
Come with thy snaky head engorde in blood,  
VVhich while these things were done spectator stood:

Lift vp blacke *Nemesis* thy glowing eyes,  
VVith *Orcus* vapours ouerspread the light,  
Let not the Sunne from out his couch arise:  
But let me write in darke these deedes of night,  
Only that burning torch shall here suffice,  
VVhose waxe is thickned blood around bedight:  
About the sinew of a conquerd foe,  
This gloomy light about my eyes shall glee.

And roare thou from thy earth appaling iaw,  
Put me in minde of dread and desolations,  
Let vncouth sights keepe downe my thoughts in aw:  
As burning blood in fiery exhalations,  
And Rauens which a dying carkasse draw,  
VVhile deadly screeches helpe to paint their passions,  
VVhile Harpyes, Owles, and Night-crowes all around,  
Fluttering about me breath a gastly sound.

And



## *Vertues Historie.*

And thou death-boding Muse whose Tragick quill  
Painteth each ruthfull stratagem aright,  
My pen with that same dreery water fill,  
Whose dropping letters readers doe afright,  
Whither from *Stixes* streames it doth distill,  
Or *Mare Rubrum*s floods oreuaylde with night:  
That this my Cronicle of woe and death,  
May seeme a dying soules last powred breath.

And thou Sedition still thy selfe present,  
That euery member right I may display,  
And whisper words of woe and dreerement,  
Sad notes of ruine and of black decay,  
Helpe hatreds praise, and enuies to inuent,  
And farre expell the thought of loue away,  
While cruell discord thundring in mine eares,  
Deepe drownes my heart in high-astounding feares.

Towards the North a goodly Citie lyes,  
Whose stately bowers wrought by *Dedale* hand:  
Lay forth their curious riches to the eyes,  
And make the passers to admire the land,  
Arts chiefeft beautie hence doth fayre arise,  
And once both fayre and happie was this strand.  
But now the renting earthquakes of debate,  
Shake *Atlas* pillars which vpholde the state.

This City *Bdella* calde, and he that raines,  
Is *Aimaran*, the cruellst wight aliue,  
His soule doth leape to view his subiects paynes:  
And when his Taxers doe great heapes contriue,  
Of subiects riches, and extorted gaines,  
Then doth his soule into his port ariue,  
Like rauens that on carkasses doe feede,  
And glut their corps full glad while others bleede.

But

## Vertues Historie.

But furious hate had with his egging sting,  
Commou'd them to the feeling of their woe,  
And straight the Commons fall a counsailing,  
How they their heauy yoke might from them throw,  
And in some bounds this bloody deluge bring,  
Least it should shortly make an ouer-flow,  
And driue this Waspe from out their hony-nest,  
Before his tyrannie consume the rest.

These murmuring conuents came to *Midas* eares,  
(For what from Kings and Potentates are hid?)  
But dismall horror in his heart appeares,  
An hundred gardians he about doth bid,  
And parasites whose troope the State downe reares,  
Foule wormes which neuer yet a crowne could rid;  
While he at rushing of each moued straw,  
Thinks he an host of armed foemen saw.

The guilt of conscience doth his thoughts torment,  
Feare is immured in his rented skin,  
It seemes here doth a ghost it selfe present,  
And houering aske where all his kinsfolks bin,  
There one who cryes out blood and dreeriment,  
And *Tisiphon* to plague him for his sin;  
While horror in his eares deaths knill doth toule,  
And deadly trembling graspeth on his soule.

It chanc'd this time that *Phæbus* wending downe,  
And breathles driuing to his loued west,  
Saw where in *Thetis* breasts softs-softest downe,  
*Neptune* was taking his vnlawfull rest:  
*Phæbus* thereat was wroth and gan to frowne,  
And straight forswore his loues now lothed west,  
Vowing with *Tellus* now should be his seate,  
And she should feele the comfort of his heate.

K

*Phæbus*



## *Vertues Historie.*

*Phæbus* then timely rose, and did embrace  
Fayre *Tellus* with the vigour of his rayes,  
Who straight begun to spring and grow apace:  
And hence it came that in these later dayes  
We haue ourspring, when *Phæbus* glorious face  
Begins to lengthen his protracted wayes:  
And still this time remembring her offence,  
He makes on earth his greater residence.

These dayes were come, and *Phæbus* with his shine  
Doth make the solac't earth her fruits to bring,  
Whose sight refresheth mens foredaunted cyne,  
While tuning birds their sweetest carrols sing,  
And naked trees their vestures doe refine,  
Mou'd with this sight goes soorth a solacing;  
The lustie youth, and to his bonibell,  
Each doth a lesson of the Summer tell.

Amongst the rest walks soorth a forlorne wight,  
Euen like *Heracitus*, from whose moyft eyes,  
Still-flowing teares notes of a griued spright,  
As welling fountaines fruitfully arise,  
His head as scorning heauens most delight,  
Looking still downward on his shoulder lyes,  
As though his heart and troubled spirits haue,  
His ioy intumulated in the graue.

Sometimes to heau'n he lookes, and then he weepes  
For her sweet soule that to her rest is fled;  
Vpon the ayre, and then his eyes he steepes  
In flowing Oceans which by griefe are bred;  
Vpon the earth, then in a trance he sleepes,  
And slumbring sinketh downe as carkasse dead:  
But then some sence doth him recall againe,  
In life to dye and liue in deadly paine.

But

## *Vertues Historie.*

But now a groane doth beate his hearkning eare,  
And many tumblings issuing from below,  
When straight he cries, O death thrice-welcome heare,  
My yeares are ripe, come, downe them gently mow,  
Giue end vnto the woe my heart doth teare,  
And sweetest ease vpon my soule bestow :  
With that he falls vnto the loued ground,  
While ioyes his drowned heart doe deepe astound.

But then the ghost replies, awake deare loue,  
No death, thy life and dearest wife I am,  
VVhom tyrants hand from thee did once remoue,  
Now doe I come for to reuenge the same,  
Strike vp thy sences (deare) thy valour proue :  
And when to him the Lady neerer came,  
She gaue him armour which *Achilles* wore,  
VVhen *Hectors* side with hideous stroke he tore.

And sayes, here be the ransomes of my life,  
That shall plead vengeance of the tyrants soule :  
He at the name of his beloued wife,  
Thrice 'flayd within his armes her to enroule,  
But thrice her flying ghost doth end the strife,  
And doth his warring sences streight controule :  
Farre flies her soule escaping humane sight,  
Like louring Falcon in her ayrie flight.

This was his loued spouse, whom *Aimaran*,  
Not yeelding to his lust, causde to be slaine,  
*Dicea* was her name, whom wicked man  
In sepulcher too timely doth detaine,  
VVhen first her wofull husband hopeles ran  
Into despayre, not daring to complaine :  
And still lamenting all his dayes outweares,  
Vpon her graue greene growing with his teares.



## *Vertues Historie.*

As one whom raving *Hecuba* hath bit,  
Whose blood corrupted with her venom'd tung,  
Confounds his senses and amaz'th his wit,  
And vncouth noyse that in his eare still rung,  
Casteth him downe in some outrageous fit,  
With such a fury was this mourner stung :  
Despayre still howleth in his flagging eare,  
Haunting his heart like ouer-hungry beare.

But now hath hope that sweet phisition,  
Lifted the spirits which were farre deprest,  
Infusing in a cordiall potion,  
Solacing drops which worke eternall rest,  
And driving thence this mourning passion,  
Inthroniz'th thoughts of Ire within his brest :  
Whose sulphure kindled with a mounting fire,  
Blow vengeance in his hearts contorted fire.

Foordth doth he march to the seditious campe,  
Who only did expect some worthy head,  
That might conduct them as their lights bright lampe,  
Amidst warres darknes which are menaced :  
Who when they saw him, like a clowdy dampe  
That doth the wayled fields all ouer-spred :  
So doe their troopes concurre from euery part,  
As veniall blood vnto the liuely hart.

They haue agreed of placing euery wing,  
*Themistos* is the Generall of the field :  
They pitch their tents with ioy and reuelling,  
And warlike bowers now apace they build,  
And now black night her rusty coach doth bring,  
Furthering with silence all euents they wild :  
All things for battell readie are prepar'd,  
The townsmen sleepe as they that nothing car'd.

The

## Vertues Historie.

The morne no sooner op'd her ruddy gate,  
But straight a peale of Trumpeters doe sound,  
To stirre their hearts with thoughts of hie debate,  
Whose hate against their king might deepe rebound,  
As Mandrakes cry a passer doth amate,  
Striking his soule with irrecured wound:  
So doth this noyse affright great *Bellasi* peeres,  
To heare such musicke rattle in their eares.

Hark *Aimaran* how death with gaffly cry,  
Doth sound the knill of thy deserued fate:  
Heare how the trumpet of thy destinie,  
Looseth the bands of blood ennur'd hate,  
That tingles in thine eares and bids thee die:  
Yet stops deaths doores and shuts that loued gate,  
*Bellona* howling from her bellowing caue,  
Bids thee torment thy selfe and curse and rane.

Where shall thy haunted soule finde place of rest?  
The heau'ns are darkned with the bloody smoke  
Of harmles Saints, whose liues thy hands oppress,  
Hell vapours ready are thy soule to choke:  
In earth the shrieks of ghosts thy thoughts molest,  
And furies which the doores of bondage broke,  
Come vp to banquet on thy powred blood,  
And make their damned selues this damned food.

As *Athamas* whom furie doth enflame,  
Teares poore *Learchus* with his bloodie hands,  
And madly runs whom no restraint can tame,  
But furious wanders through vnknowne lands:  
So doth this tyrant burne in quenchles flames,  
Breaking with violence all natures bands,  
Like one that drunke the *Ethiopian* lake,  
Into whose soule thousands of furies brake.



## *Vertues Historie.*

But now in counsell house they doe all fit,  
To try if policie can better fight,  
And make their battels with the armes of wit :  
But troubled fences cannot iudge aright,  
And they rapt in the trance of sudden fit,  
VVith staring gazes each their mates affright,  
That now they are but like a flock of owles,  
VVondring to see themselves such shapeles fowles.

At last a *Nestor* bolder doth arise,  
And tels no time it was thus staring fit,  
But send some Legate to the enemies,  
To tell if their requests with reason fit,  
They should be granted all in ample wise :  
Another as reproving former wit,  
Thinks it is best with fierce and open warre,  
To driue these rebels thence removed farre.

But now stands vp *Vlysses* : certes (quoth he)  
All that you say is but consumed winde :  
But rather let our Kings great maiestie,  
Himselfe with solemne oth in letters binde,  
That whatsoeuer rebels armed be,  
If they returne they shall great fauour finde,  
And haue rewarded them incontinent,  
VVhat wrong soeuer causde their discontent.

But when they come well shall we then prouide,  
To quite their curtesie with cutting fare,  
The sword of vengeance shall the cause decide,  
Each rebell that tumultuous armour bare,  
Shall his rebellion with great smart abide:  
And for the peoples voyce let no man care,  
The Lion roring in his princely den,  
Shall with his noyse astonish lesser men.

## *Vertues Historie.*

Foule serpent-head within whose poyſned braine,  
A thouſand diuels keepe a cabinet,  
VVhich mightie *Ioue* hath damn'd to during paine,  
VVhen for this deed thou ſhalt for anguiſh fret,  
Thy cankerd ſoule who ſhall no reſt obtaine,  
But feed thy wombe with woe and deepe regret,  
Millions of furies yawning with their iawes,  
Shall combe thy carkaffe with their renting clawes.

Horror within thy ſoule ſhall thee affright,  
VVhich mak'ſt of nought the truth deſpising good,  
Damnation doth awayt: But O dread fight!  
Loe many I doe ſee in raging mood,  
VVhich bid me ſilent be, and in deſpight  
Bid me leaue preaching, or the ile haue my blood:  
VVell I recant this counſel was not bad,  
But worſt, and what degree Ill greater had.

Now while this mate was telling on his text,  
In breakes *T hemiſtes* with a mightie hoſt,  
The gates are broken, and the towne perplex,  
It hapt this counſell which they coured moſt,  
Hath loſt his end; come come deuise the next,  
Or worſe then this, and then thy haunted gholt  
VVith the next furie that to *Orcus* went,  
May for a token to great *Dis* be ſent.

But tis too late, looke where the winters froſt  
Fals, that ſhall kill thy boughs with pinching cold:  
Looke *Aſmaran*, ſee thy heapes which now are loſt,  
Thoſe heapes which thou from ſubiects didſt withhold,  
See how thy ſouldiers dying ban thy gholt,  
And ding it downe to hell a thouſand fold:  
Goe curſe and dye, accompany their ſoules,  
Carrouſe with *Pluto* black *Cocitus* boles.

Behind



## *Vertues Historie.*

Behind thee doth a hagge awayt thy end,  
To carrie hence that blood-defiled masse:  
At hell doe all the ghosts in ranks attend,  
For to salute thee when thou soorth doest passe:  
Yonder thy deaths-man stands, whose hand shall send  
Thy spirit to his well deserued place,  
While infants wallowing in their mothers gore,  
Shall passe thee downward with a gastly rore.

Looke how thy subiects lye all martyred;  
There sits a matron dying on her child;  
Their mangled carcasses but tortured,  
By neuer dying paine from death beguild;  
The rehell-sonnes runne where their fathers bled,  
And in vnhumane blood their feete defilde;  
The heapes of corpes like a *Pharus* ly,  
And bloody riuers like the red-sea by.

Nothing but skarlet doth inuest the streete,  
Which like a iudge doth frowne vpon the sky,  
A great *Aegon* all along doth fleete,  
In which dead heapes of men ore-whelmed ly;  
Here a big rock of armour you shall meete,  
There a great Ile of men you shall passe by,  
While sanguine obieet with his strong reflexe,  
Staines heau'ns fayre face with purple scattered strekes.

Howle foule *Megara* from thy gulfie throat,  
And ring thy knill for *Aimaranes* ghost;  
*Charon* prouide thy neuer emptie boat,  
He meanes anon to trauell yonder coast;  
*Alecto* now put on thy crimson coat,  
Least he in bloody fayreones thee out-boast;  
Combe downe thy snaky locks, dresse right thy head,  
He louing meanes with thee to take his bed.

Like

## *Vertues Historie.*

Like *Margiates* in West Indy's land,  
When *Ioues* great thunder bellows in their eares,  
Quauering and shaking they afrighted stand,  
To heare that heauen a base so hollow beares,  
So doth this monster at his foemens band,  
Faint feare vp lifts his bloody clotted heares,  
For feare (which doth his heart subdued take)  
His paralitike members still doe quake.

When comes *T hemistos* and with gliding sword,  
No sooner pearceth his disseuerd skin,  
But thousand Diuells on his corse doe bord,  
And greedie thrust their bloody muzzels in.  
After they heaue him to the Stygian ford,  
Where for the guilt of deepe inured sin,  
With wieri whips he suffers grisly wounds,  
And with his raving, hells vast vault rebounds.

But where that wicked counsaier was gone,  
Each man doth doubt, some say that downe to hell  
Aliue he was distraught, and many a one  
That by the sword's well worthy edge he fell;  
But howsoeuer let him lye alone,  
No man shall grudge the chance that him befell:  
The heauen shall melt, the Sunne shall baite in South,  
Before he shall escape hells yawning mouth.



# Vertues Historie.

## CANT. 2.

*Themistos with Encrata takes his way,  
Astonisht with a hideous yelling cry:  
And Erophel is flying fast away  
From her sweete loue that for her wrong will dye;  
Who now affrighted with a rarest chance,  
Against his life his owne hand doth aduance.*

**T**He comet fumes which from the earth ascend,  
Vnto great *Cynthias* concaue circulation,  
May long defer their doome-denouncing end,  
Before they be compact in conglobation,  
But at the last their fury they pretend,  
Kindled with some celestiall inflammation,  
No cloude their eating flames with moysture stops,  
But downe they poure their ruddy-burning drops.

So may the smoaky sighs of Innocents,  
VWhich by great *Ioue* still make their sad complaint,  
Long volley forth, before reuenge assents,  
The guiltie damned soules for to attaint,  
But when deepe vengeance once her clawes indents,  
The comet of their plague shall neuer faint,  
But with new brimstone freshly still relieu'd,  
Shall keepe them in still-during torments grieu'd.

VWhich *Bdellaes* towers, wel-worthy towres haue scene,  
And felt the stroake which long hath been deferd,  
Iustice long houer'd heaven and them betweene,  
And with repining eares their follies heard,  
At last inflamde with wrath and ragefull teene,  
Maskt in a bloody fire she streight appeerd,  
VWhose flakie flame pitching on *Bdella* walls,  
VWith them in euerlasting ruin falls.

## *Vertues Historie.*

So is it left all desolate forgone,  
No call of Musick nor of man doth sound,  
The shady Owle in deadly notes doth groane,  
And luckles VVezells nestle in the ground,  
VVhile goary blood besprinkled all vpon,  
Reflecteth in the ayre a circle round,  
VVhose gloomie sight vntill these latest day,  
Driues fearefull passengers another way.

Sometimes the ghosts walke in those paths of wo,  
And with their skreeching fright the neighbour land,  
Sometime a fier doth seeme alone to go,  
A thousand torches as in battell band,  
And brandish in the darknes to and fro,  
At which the inhabitants appalled stand,  
It seemes blacke hell hath ript her prison wombe,  
And meanes in maske vnto the earth to come.

Now hath *Themistos* left this fearefull place,  
And he alone is gone to seeke his chaunce,  
Minded not euer back to turne his face,  
But armed with that sword of piercing Lance,  
VVhich slew great *Aimaran*, he forth doth passe,  
And gainst each foe his weapon doth aduaunce :  
Now hath he crost full many a wood and hill,  
To vertue no way euer happens ill.

This time it chaunst that *Ereb* had debate,  
VVroth with his wife, rapt forth a fire brand,  
VVholothing light, and kindled straight with hate,  
Lifts vp from sable hell her pitchy band,  
And with her gloomy troupe at *Phæbus* gate,  
To keepe the light from earth entagde did stand:  
So was *Themistos* ere he was aware,  
Left in black shadow and to nightly care.



## *Vertues Historie.*

But on the plaine he spies a mightie tree,  
Whose greene attire did shield the falling raine,  
And oft in vnder *Floraes* Nymphs with glee,  
Would dauncing leade their fayre *Napean* traine,  
That with soft downe his rootes inuested bee,  
Where *Faunus* with this Nymph hath often lain:  
Here doth he meane to passe the silent night,  
Till with his eyes he shall salute the light.

The Starres all ready at their watch doe lye,  
And silent murmur whistles through the greene,  
Which rockes his senses with a Lullaby,  
That in deepe slumber now they buried beene,  
Delighted with this dumpish harmony:  
But now fayre *Phæbe* halfe her way hath scene,  
And his deepe dreaming is so violent,  
It cannot longer time be permanent.

*Morpheus* hath left his blacke pauillion,  
And hath vnlockt the portals of his eyes,  
When streight he lookes the continent vpon,  
Whither the Mornings chariot yet did rise,  
But she with *Tithon* kept her mansion,  
And in his colde embraces chayned lies:  
This while the Knight doth smile vpon the aire,  
To see it shining such a duskie faire.

But as he viewes, the most celestially face,  
That euer nature made to shew her power,  
Sends to his eyes the beames of such a grace,  
As beauties fairest rayes they forth did powre,  
Naked she was, and spotles from deface,  
Beautie she seemde it selfe, or beauties bower:  
That if fayre heauen on earth did euer dwell,  
Then this was heauen, on whom all graces fell.

Her

## *Vertues Historie.*

Her skinne the linnen where with cunning start,  
Beauty had wrought the summe of all her skill,  
While with her needle heere and there apart,  
With azure worke her sampler she doth fill,  
And turning to the brestplate of her heart,  
She worketh fairely there a double hill,  
Where on her double ruddy stewards doe stand,  
Which keepe the haruest of fayre beauties land.

These lightning darts his heart had almost brent,  
Though not in lust but in diuineſt loue,  
Therefore his eyes as messengers he sent,  
Vnto that mayde her curtesie to proue,  
Who with these words her treasure doores vnbeut,  
Let not the thought of me your passions moue,  
For from the heauens I come to guide your feete,  
In pureſt paths from deedes and waies vnmeet.

He gently proferd her a Nectar-kisse,  
She met him yet did blush as halfe with shame:  
He now is hers, and she is wholly his,  
But not as looser wantons them doe name,  
This thoughts diuine harmoniall consort is,  
Farre from the deedes of night those worthy blame,  
Whose noysome poyson cankering within,  
Consumes the flesh with paine, the soule with sin.

But while within their foules this melody  
Sounds pleasing tunes all rauishing the heart,  
They are affrayghted with a hideous cry,  
Like to an host conioynd in bloody Mart:  
And bellow forth a note when downe they dye,  
Which doth perswade these louers to depart:  
Where let them take the chance to them assignd,  
Ere long time passe, I shall their iourney finde.



## *Vertues Historie.*

This noyse which tumbled in such fearefull wise,  
Came from two brethren twixt whom deadly hate,  
Still causes of new discord doth deuise,  
For when the warrie Queene faire *Thetis* late,  
In *Lemnos* walke, *Vulcan* did her surprise;  
And on that Lady these two sonnes begate;  
VVho of two disagreeing Natures brought,  
In passions disagreeing euer fought.

But *Vulcan* wrought them armour with a charme,  
And mighty swords which incantation bound,  
That neuer could they worke each others harme,  
But in their foes would dint a grieously wound,  
After he did his Sonnes thus strongly arme,  
He set them in a ship, when first this ground  
Receade these warriors, that each little houre,  
Their blades into each others breasts they poure.

This *Diaphon* that *Pyrhydor* is hight,  
VVho since they came into this litle Ile,  
Haue ouercome in doughty strokes of fight,  
All Knights within the space of forty mile;  
But she on which these brethren now alight,  
A Lady is that did her selfe exile:  
From those which loue her as their deare delight,  
And doth bewayle this her vngentle flight.

VVhom seeing straight they ran to captiuate,  
First *Diaphon*, then *Pyrhydor* doth flie,  
But cruell *Pyrhydor* inflamde with hate,  
That he before him to the game should hie,  
VVith a huge blow downe cloue his riuen pate,  
The other fairely quites his surquedry,  
The Lady flying, piteously doth crye,  
On ground they wounded, bellowing doe lye.

VVhere

## *Vertues Historie.*

VWhere lye they may this dame I'll follow fast,  
And by enquest search out her cause of flight,  
She was a vertuous (but that time is past)  
A vertuous Lady lou'd of each mans sight,  
But now her faithles deedes haue quite defast,  
And darkned all her glories shining light :  
    Blacke cloudes of sinne, and neuer blushing shame,  
    Doe wrap those siluer wings of former fame.

As when the blossomes of a springing tree,  
Promise the owner haruests chiefeft pride,  
And *Ver*yclad in gorgeous iollity,  
Though *Floraes* kingdome in her pompe doth ride,  
Great hope there is that there great store will be:  
But when the lightning from the heauen doth slide,  
    Then are they choaked in the sweetest prime,  
    And all forget it was so good a time.

So did the bloome of her fayre springing youth,  
Clad in the robes of snow-white chastity,  
Perswade the world a fruitfull time ensueth,  
And largest riuers of fertility,  
But all this hope is turned into ruth,  
VWhen filthy flame of infidelity,  
    Scorcheth the wings on which pure faith doth flye,  
    And makes her in her verdant blooming dye.

She *Erofel* is calde, whom long there lou'd,  
Good *Erophel* well tride at sword and speare,  
And to her match, her still her parents mou'd,  
VWhile she great kindnes in her front did weare,  
And seemde to loue him as it her behou'd,  
But in went masking heart of cruell beare;  
    VWhich Loue doth hate, and takes his deepest ioy,  
    VWith treacherous words to worke her lours annoy.  
    Mischiefs



## *Vertues Historie.*

Mischiefes foule venome bloweth vp her wombe,  
VVorse then *Calipsoes* toxicating draught:  
Her wicked heart is his funereall tombe,  
From whence the source of his sad death he raught,  
Hence doe his soules corrosiue drenches come,  
VVhich in deepe sorrow his deare soule indraught;  
VVhile the like *Iuno* at her husbands thunder,  
Laugheth to see fayre *Semele* torne asunder.

For when in gentle sorte she seemde to quite  
Faire glaunces to his euer darting eyes,  
He would in mariage bands confirme delight,  
VVhat ere he askes, she seeming not denies;  
And doth auow to doe her Virgin-right,  
The day is come whereon his hope relies:  
They are conioyned in a holy band,  
He with his heart, she only with her hand.

Now doth he pray the Sunne to flie apace,  
And lash great *Pieris* on his lightning side,  
Then *Cynthia* he desires to shew her face,  
And bids her nightly chariot vpward slide,  
Then doth he pray the cloudes for to disgrace  
The darkned night, and with their vailles to hide  
The loathed beames of *Phæbus* lingring light,  
And make the Sunne arise of his delight.

O foolish man how are thy wits yblent,  
VVhy dost thou runne into thy latest path,  
Stay yet sweete Knight before thou doe repent,  
To late then will it be to heale thy skath,  
And quench the fire when as thy bones are brent,  
But so dire fate our deedes directed hath,  
That like blinde Moles into our bane we goe,  
But then she giues vs eyes to see our woe.

Night

## *Vertues Historie.*

Night vp doth rise the marke of all his thought,  
But sure his dart will misse the prick anon :  
For *Erofel* hath an *Aethiop* hath sought,  
Whom with rewards and mony she hath won,  
That to the genial bed this hagge is brought :  
For *Erofel* to bed would goe alone,  
Refusing offred helpe, but she hath set  
Another Pigeon in her cabinet.

And as the custome was she set a vaile,  
Which hid the worser face, and shewd the fayre :  
Thus doth she set her rotten ship to saile,  
And to a priuate chamber doth repayre :  
But *Erophil* his hower doth not faile,  
At her due time he meanes all debts to pay her :  
He off doth cast the clowdes, whose euious darke  
Hinders his sayling to the goodly barke.

The torches quenched he is left to rest,  
And sets on foote vpon his fatall bed :  
O foote step back before thou be vnblest,  
And be not guided with so rash a head :  
O head seduced with so foule a guest,  
With such alluring bayt O be not fed :  
And O sweet Knight before thou grieve do reape,  
Fall not so soone, but looke before thou leape.

But all in vaine, downe he his bones doth lay;  
O haples bones that neuer thence shall rise,  
He hopes to driue the chariot of the day,  
Whose beames did daze a while his staring eyes :  
But *Erofel* doth giue his wishes nay ;  
Straight to her breast embraces he applies,  
Then sugred-bitter kisses, and anon :  
But shame and grieve now bid me to be gon.



## *Vertues Historie.*

The Moone downe wept a dewy dropping raine,  
Wayling the fate of sweetest *Erophil*,  
And seemed to sayre *Tellus* to complaine,  
That twas great griefe that loue such soule should kill,  
Her darksome steedes she would haue seded faine,  
And made black night about remaining still,  
That day might neuer bring that sunny ray,  
Whose sight might bring this wofull Knights decay.

But *Phæbus* rose, forbidding longer night,  
And faine the *Æthiop* would berime depart:  
O no (quoth he) my chiefeft loued light,  
Then shalt thou take away my dearest hart,  
And with eclipsing this thy cleereft bright,  
Thou shalt eclipse my soules essentiall part:  
And then with an embrace he caught her head,  
Therewith her beautie was vncouered.

Out leapes a face like to the *Lician* men,  
That suddenly were turned into frogs:  
Or when that *Cerberus* raised from his den,  
Gastly presents three vgly barking dogs:  
Or to the pitchy *Queene* of darknes then,  
When she goes masking all in dampish fogs,  
Fearing to put her beauties vaile away,  
Least to the wind she should her forme display.

The Knight astounded, rapt his mighty sword,  
And present die thou *Incubus* (quoth he)  
Which with a fiend hast wrought these deedes abhord:  
Farewell thou falsed loue where ere thou bee,  
This edge shall end to griefe and life afford:  
With that his troubled ghost he soone doth free,  
Who to those thirtle groues doth pearcing flie,  
Where he with *Dido* inournes his miserie.

Now

## Vertues Historie.

Now *Erofel* is gone in triumph fled,  
And laugheth at her Tragick-plotting wit;  
Where still with feate be thou disquieted,  
Let gastly thoughts thy gnawed conscience bite;  
And let those wormes within thy soule be bred,  
That neuer may surcease tormenting it:  
While with all plots of mischiefe that I may,  
Ile compasse thee, not resting night or day.

---

### CANT. 3.

*Themistos heares a wofull wight complaine,  
And fights against the fearfull Giants twins,  
While Erofel doth heare Pirinoes paine,  
And to torment him freshly she begins:  
Still he repeats his lone and lones desire,  
Still she doth scorch him in a greater fire.*

**T**Hough fortune feed thee with her delicates,  
And starres doe seeme to aspire vnto thy blisse,  
Trust not the fickle reeling of the fates,  
Nor in fond pleasures lap doe lie remisse,  
Hell still in op'ning her black rustie gates,  
And sends forth fiends that tempt vs to amisse:  
Therefore about thy soule keepe surest watch,  
Least that temptation should thee ouer-match.

Though good *Themistos* had from heauen sent  
A blessed gardian to direct his feete,  
Yet cleere he was not, for incontinent  
A wicked Lady doth his iourney meete,  
And arm'd she was as one for iustice bent:  
But she was wanton and for pleasure meete:  
At her birth-day fierce warriours angry king,  
VVith the fayre Queene of loue was reuelling.



## *Vertues Historie.*

And *Cipribe* her name, who now in loue  
With good *Themistos*, still did tempt to shame,  
And with vaine questions did his fancie moue:  
But fayre *Encrata* would her sharply blame,  
And with some holy tale her talke remoue,  
That she enraged with this Angell dame,  
Swelleth with wrath that neuer can be quencht,  
So deepe in poyfond heart it is indrencht.

She would haue rackt her lims ten thousand wayes,  
And spred her like the dust vpon the ground:  
But loue enforcing, she much other sayes,  
When soone *Themistos* had her purpose found,  
And seemes to yeeld to her: but with delays,  
Least he should quite enforce a tureles wound:  
And still he seekes to turne her path awry,  
Into some other journey lying by.

Now while they passe, loe yond they see a wight,  
Beating his breast with huge and ruthles blowes:  
Sometimes he staring lookes on heauens light,  
And streight himselfe vpon the earth he throwes:  
Then on his haire his fingers doe alight,  
And flies as if he were pursu'd with foes,  
And then as burden of his deadly song,  
He scricheth that the woods resound along.

His face so pale and skin transparent was,  
It seem'd Deaths ghastly looking glasse to be,  
And then he cryes, loe yond he comes alas!  
The Giant! O now whither shall I flie?  
But soone toward him doth *Themistos* passe,  
And bids him cheare his wofull heart: but he  
Refuseth any sparke of least delight,  
And with his soule gainst comfort strong doth fight.

○

## *Vertues Historie.*

O what haue you to doe in dead mens graues?  
(Quoth he) why trouble you what longs to death?  
And hinder my repast, as curses, raues,  
And sighs and teares, which feede my lingring breath,  
Sorrow within my breast round-vaulted caues  
Sings tunes, which most my eares sweet rauisheth:  
Goe fondlings to your haples wanton end,  
I will on Griefe and blessed Death attend.

Then with a griping gnash he ends his tale,  
As though an earthquake all his bowls did teare:  
But him the Knight bespoke to tell his bale,  
And who the authors of his sorrow were.  
But he: so shall I cause thee to bewaile,  
And I grow worse: for cursed hope may nere  
Take me from out my loued sorrowes bands,  
For all my soule I yeeld into thy hands.

But since thou needs wilt draw my cursed chance,  
I *Algiger* am calde, that happie of yore,  
Till fortune frownd with crabbed countenance,  
But now ill luck downe all my triumphs bore:  
Yonder two monsters did their strength aduance  
Against my house, which fearfull ruin tore,  
My friends are slaine, and I am left alone  
To be: and there he breathd a deadly grone.

Faine would the Knight more of his tale expresse,  
But he to any earthly ioy was dead;  
His soule entombd in deepe heauinesse,  
Into a pleasing senses dreame was led.  
The Knight full greatly mou'd with his distresse,  
Awakt him from his cares most vncouth bed:  
But for no treasure that on earth doth lie,  
Would he this Knight in way accompanie.



## *Vertues Historie.*

VWhere leauing him, the Knight doth forward goe,  
Seeking by any meanes the way to finde:  
But soone he found it, for all passers know,  
VVith sad experience all that monstrous kinde,  
For still they worke the countrie scath and woe,  
Leauing each where sad notes of ruth behinde:  
And now the Knight arriues vnto the place,  
VVhere his great valour shall their force deface.

He knocks against the posternes of the gate,  
VVhen streight forth steps a beldam dry with age,  
VVhen she the Knight espies, then plung'd in hate,  
Vnto her sonnes she runnes, who all in rage  
Come forth embrued with the spoyle, which late  
They made, for safely passe no carriage:  
This find hath *Policlapon* to his name,  
That *Pantarpazon* children of one dame.

Huge mighty corps they haue, which like a tree  
March to and fro full gastly to behold:  
Their heads with rau'nish iawes foule woluish bee:  
Some say a diuell did their dame infold,  
Other that with a wolfe lay vgly shee:  
But how-soere, all filthie is her mold,  
*Harpyia* she, well worthie such a brood,  
At whose birth-time some hagge as midwife stood.

Now with the Knight the elder boy doth fight,  
Yawning like *Orcus* iawes and gaping wide:  
But at the first downe in his throte there pight  
The speares sharpe poynt which doth full deeply slide,  
VVhen streight he parbreakes forth (O lothsome fight)  
Great filthie gobbets which doe vpward glide,  
And rawish meate and flesh that yet did bleede,  
The nourishment on which his vice did feede.

But

## *Vertues Historie.*

But then *Harpys* soule doth curse amaine,  
VVhen as she sees him groueling on the ground,  
And howles and raues, and bids his brother gaine  
The full reuengement of that deadly wound :  
He thought with meeting blow at first t'haue slaine,  
The Knight auoyding, downe it doth rebound :  
The hideous beame wherewith this monster fought,  
Into the groning earth full deepe is wrought.

VVhen nimble he diuides his conduit-pipe,  
Through which the *Lerna* of his sinne did flow,  
It seem'd for *Pluto* now his soule was ripe,  
VVith such a trice off doth his forehead goe :  
The whining dame doth with her apron wipe  
His brothers throte, thinking his life to flow :  
But all the furies of infernall hell,  
Long since within his damned corps doe dwell.

They thus captiu'd, he takes that foggie fiend,  
And strips her naked from her antique hew,  
And to a spreader both her feete doth binde,  
That she might neuer him nor his pursew,  
And with a cord doth tye her hands behinde :  
Thus is this haggard placed in her mew,  
And to the scorching Sunne her face doth turne,  
VVho with his beames doth her most feruent burne.

She with her curses gripes heau'ns highest seat,  
Accusing them of her deserued paine,  
And execrates the Sunne for sending heat,  
Bidding him drench his steeds within the maine,  
Then gainst the fearfull throane she soule doth bleat :  
But all her plaints and curses are in vaine,  
Her tortur'd soule to bloomy *Ereb* fell,  
VVhile on her carkasse crows and rauens dwell.

Here



## *Vertues Historie.*

Here to his spoyles we'le leaue this worthie Knight,  
And follow *Erefel* that flies amaine,  
Whom those two brethren did but now affright,  
She to her former tricks returns againe,  
Seeking to worke fayre loue her foule despight;  
And that she sooner might her end attaine,  
In mans apparell she is fairly clad,  
While womans skin and woluish heart she had.

Thus foorth she marched in her way alone,  
But that consoorted with deceit and guile,  
And she in many Sunnes hath painfull gone,  
But none she meets whom may her art beguile:  
Further she trauailes still, but now anon  
A voyce she heard that fits her plotted wile,  
And thus it faintly beates the yeelding ayre,  
Issuing from pangs of woe and deepe despayre.

Heart leaue to pine, since pining cannot saue,  
Soule loue not her, that doth not loue thy loue,  
Minde be no longer to that force a slaue,  
That can deepe passions, but no mercie moue,  
You cloudes of sorrow no more issue haue,  
This tree for all your watring will not proue:  
For that fayre plant bout which your waters flow,  
In midst of them all barren will not grow.

O she is sick with vnrecur'd disease,  
That serpent foule disdain her sharp doth sting,  
And to the cure I proued many wayes;  
Of my heart-blood I did a plaister bring,  
And kept it warme with sighs, and stroue to please,  
And washt it with the wels of sorrowing:  
My soules deare garden-plots I did reueale,  
Yet by the chiefest herbs she will not heale.

But

## *Vertues Historie.*

But no, I am diseas'd, here lyes the wound;  
For when her beautie had the harts in chace,  
Which in the pale of loue were seruants bound,  
Then I not able to withdraw my pace,  
My selfe by those her arrowes gored found,  
Which fly from that fayre bow of her sweet face:  
Yet though I feele the arrow in my hart,  
It doth deny me leaue to breake the dart.

Therefore thus festring deepe in venom'd skin,  
Since my liues Surgeon doth her helpe deny,  
And all my sinewes are consum'd within,  
No hope remaines on which I may rely,  
After this death my soule no life shall win,  
But in a second griefe shall ending dy:  
So shall her cruell heart be fully pleasde,  
My wounds embalm'd, and my passions easde.

These and more mournfull words still sighing deepe,  
He breathed vainly to the sensles sky,  
Which might haue brought a stony heart asleepe:  
But *Erofel* arm'd with black crueltie,  
Shutteth the gates which pitie vsde to keepe,  
And barring forth the plaints of miserie:  
Thus doth she boord the Knight with words of guile,  
Which craft and fained sorrow did compile.

O doe not clowd the heauen of your face,  
With mistie vapours which black woe doth spread,  
Nor those bright lineaments so much disgrace,  
That in their chiefeest spring they should be dead:  
Sorrow with swiftest wings still flyes apace,  
And ioy goes flagging on the plumes of lead:  
Driue that away which of it selfe will flie,  
You need not open gates to miserie.

N

What



## *Vertues Historie.*

What is it loue? I know that poyson strong,  
Yet to resist against his powers assay:  
If then you be too weake to daunt his wrong,  
Open (if safely) all your storie lay:  
And if my helpe you will accept among,  
And to my precepts will eftsóones obay,  
My greatest ayd to you I will auow,  
Within this breast hath loue been cur'd ere now.

O neuer may (quoth he) my wound feele ease,  
I turne with *Sisiphus* a restles stone:  
The flames of hell the furies may appease,  
But these heart-burning coales will nere be gone:  
Gods may *Promethens* from his chaines release,  
This vultur euer feedes my heart vpon:  
These euerlasting pangs and weary breath,  
Vnto my woes giue life, to life a death.

But since her name thus sounded by my words,  
Doth so much rauish my euen-sleeping soule,  
And then Disdaine like many thousand swords,  
Rips vp the closed wound which erst was whole,  
And neerer end to fainting thought affords,  
This Tragick storie here I will vnrole,  
The Chronicle of many a wofull thing,  
Which in those dayes were done when loue was king.

VVithin a stately pallace happie dwels  
A mightie Lord, whose now-extolled height,  
By fortunes ayd the state by much excels,  
Of any neighbour Prince or forren Knight  
Blest now he is, but not so blessed els,  
Had not sayre Nature lent those torches light,  
VVhich guide the fortune of each mightie peere,  
VVithout whose helpe their fame will nere be cleere.

The

## *Vertues Historie.*

The fayrest offspring from his loynes proceed,  
That euer heau'ns coniur'd should rauish eye,  
VVhose very thought my dying soule doth feed,  
VVith fainting sight of such felicitie :  
Sure some diuine she is, no earthly seed,  
No man can sound so sweet a harmonic,  
Fairest of faires, burning bright beauties flame,  
Heauenly her nature, *Bellamy* her name.

O let me see the mornes fayre blushing rise,  
Or let the doue set forth her fayrest white ;  
Let heauen vnclose his treasure to the eyes,  
And fayrest gemmes present them to my sight,  
Or pleasantst shew that in each colour lyes,  
VVith which faind beautie often shineth bright :  
These all vnited in one goodly frame,  
Can scarce describe the picture of my dame.

Sure *Ioue* was framing a new starry light,  
And seeing heauen full, here made her place :  
Heart-plunging thoughts doe rauish with delight,  
VVhen *I* but once doe seeme to view her face;  
Me thinks my spirit nere should see the night,  
Rapt deeply with the image of her grace :  
In vaine I haue her fame and praises sung,  
My tongue disgraceth her, she graceth my tung.

Now doth she flourish in her chiefeft spring,  
(O heauenly spring, though winter to my dayes)  
And thirtie Knights there lie a reuelling,  
Seeking by valiant acts and sundrie wayes,  
VVho to her thoughts may sweetest pleasure bring,  
And who may win the sunshine of her rayes :  
Orayes which through my heart as thinnest glasse,  
VVith pearcing light and brightest edge doe passe.



## *Vertues Historie.*

One time in Iusts a spectacle they made,  
When as my eyes the sad spectators were,  
Still with my growing sight my hope did fade,  
And still my loue did grow though hope did weare.  
Thus pressed with despayres most heauy lade,  
Her sight all hopeles, heartles I forbear:  
For when so many woo'd one onely dame,  
I thought too late my fancies suing came.

Therefore exposde to sorrow and despayre,  
Here will I sing the Dirges of my death:  
Sometimes the Nightingale doth here repaire,  
Consorting with me in a plaining breath:  
Sometimes the turtle robbed of her paire,  
In groaning noyse my tune accompaneth,  
While pleasant death sweet singing in mine eare,  
A part in this my plaining song doth beare.

Thus farre this Swan sung soorth his mournfull plaint,  
And much I rue the paine which him doth hold:  
For well I know the plague which doth attaint,  
This wofull man doth him most heauy fold.  
Now *Erofel* with words which ioy did paine,  
Seemed to haue his sorrow much controld:  
But what she spoke occasion doth deny  
To tell, till better time shall bid reply.

Now some will thinke that I am much vnkinde,  
To let this wofull wight thus plunged ly:  
But little doe they know what I doe finde,  
That yet remaines more infelicitie,  
And she as women wont will haue her minde,  
Though for his ease I many wayes doe trie:  
And though in his defence I strongly stand,  
These women needs will haue the vpper hand.

CANT.

# Vertues Historie.

## CANT. 4.

Diaphon and Pirthydor in endles blowes  
Batter the castles of their furious harts,  
Brethren by birth, by deeds most cruell foes,  
That bloody still torment each others parts,  
While Algiger all mortifide in soule,  
The worlds short pleasures deeply doth controule.

**A**S when a fire brand that fiercely burnes,  
Taken from *Vulcans* euer-breathing flame,  
And in the water layd, each other turnes  
Their force, their angry enemy to tame,  
And while that either others might doth spurne,  
From twixt them both a mightie ratling came:  
At last when neither gets the vpper side,  
The force of both in might away doth slide.

Such is the flame which Discord doth incense,  
That still it fights, and still it wasts away,  
Still suffering losse, without a recompence,  
With her owne subiect still she doth decay:  
Still on her face she doth presume defence,  
When still she meanes to get a spoyled pray,  
The filthie rust that in our soule doth creepe;  
And with her griping teeth still gnaweth deepe.

Thus doe these brethren wast each others might,  
Hewing their armour with down-thundering blowes:  
The burning fire neuer wanteth light,  
Which discord with her enuious bellows blowes;  
Her bellows to her seruants likned right,  
Whereof one swels when downe his mate he throwes:  
Such is the state of any enuious minde,  
That by anothers fall his seat doth finde.



## *Vertues Historie.*

But now the mightiest fit that euer mou'd  
A warring soule to furie and to rage,  
Their concord with new quarels hath reprou'd,  
Whose force no hope there is ere to assuage:  
If euer least degree they faining lou'd,  
Their loue shall neuer see that infant-age,  
Madnes hath blowen vp their swelling harts,  
Whose tumour neuer from his seate departs.

For while they trauaild on a pleasant plaine,  
They saw a little mount, that with his head  
A prospect made vpon the smiling maine:  
No bushie tree his beautie shadowed,  
But open his faire flowrie top hath laine:  
And to this hill a path directly led,  
Whither these warring brethren take their way,  
Willing to see what nouelties there lay.

Streight to their eares the sweetest harmonie  
Doth blow, that euer sweet to eare can blow,  
Whose force like fire could melt black crueltie,  
And make it quickly gentle mercie know:  
From out that little hill it soft doth flie,  
As if *Apollo* all his art would show:  
A little death it is, which vp doth send  
Our soules to heauen, before we make our end.

O cease those murdring strokes what ere thou be,  
My soule will flie from hence vnto thy cell,  
And all in loue with this will banish me;  
Sweet hony issuing from a siluer well,  
Which giu'st a surfet, not sacietie:  
O doe no more such pleasing murmurstell,  
But leaue my virgin-thoughts without annoy,  
Which thou wilt rauish with too great a ioy.

When

## *Vertues Historie.*

When this enchanting noyse their eares doth kis,  
They hating all what harmonic doth make,  
With madnes almost burst, all turned is  
To egging ire, and forth their swords they take,  
And like mad bedlams when their wit's amis,  
Into an open fight most fierce they brake,  
Where we will leaue them there to learne some wit,  
No other schoole then this can be more fit.

But now perchance this seemeth truth to passe,  
That from the earth such heauenly tunes ascend:  
But thus the Chronicles report it was,  
That long agoe within this land did wend  
A Mathematick, that did work with brasse,  
And other things which to his art did tend,  
So skilfull that no sound on earth deuise  
Hath been, but he hath highly equalizd.

And here within the earth he built a cell,  
Where he will try the utmost of his art,  
And hath by labour now conioyned well,  
Each mouing member and each sounding part,  
When with a running streame that thither fell,  
To each he doth a motion impart:  
Which all conioynd do frame a Musick sound,  
Whose forcie might can stony hearts confound.

Now Death his seruant Sicknes forth hath sent,  
Who with his dooming mace doth him arrest,  
And well he knowes his bow so long ly'ne bent,  
For euer in his vigour may not least:  
Therefore vnto this vaulted cell he went,  
Where minding to set vp his latest rest,  
He closely shuts the caues fast ceiled dore,  
Which entrance may forbid to any more.

And.



## *Vertues Historie.*

And now his engines he in worke doth set,  
Which sent forth dulcet tunes to chaunt the eare,  
While he to Nature payes his common debt,  
And to the world did neuer more appeare:  
Therefore some thought that in this cabinet,  
Immortall he all ages did outweare:  
Some superstitious thought he was diuine,  
And offred sacrifice vnto his shrine.

But he is dead (wo that such worth should die)  
And darknes triumphs ore his rotten masse:  
But his bright fame shall on her pinecons flie,  
As long as light from *Eas* doores shall passe:  
Nor euer may that base obscuritie,  
Blot from mens thoughts that such an Artift was:  
Obluion all thy teeth may nere deuoure,  
His famousde names still over-living powre.

But here the musick and these fighting mates  
I now must leaue, where with vnweldie blowes  
And mightie thunderclaps each other bates:  
So angrie *Neptune* forth the surges throwes,  
When *Aeolus* hath loofd his windy gates,  
And so against a rock the billow goes,  
As doe the lightnings of black enuies heat,  
With slicing dints their rocky armour beat.

But let me see where *Algiger* is gone,  
That erst was wounded deepe in cureles hart;  
Looke yond I see him where he walks alone,  
Still yelling with the horror of my smart:  
Sometimes to heauen he darts a heauy grone,  
Then to the earth he doth a sigh impart,  
While with the teares downe rouling on his skin,  
He wash'th his face without, not wo within.

Not

## *Vertues Historie.*

Not long he trauaild till a mournfull sound,  
Sadly doth beat his sadder seated eare,  
VVhen ô he cryes, and is there on the ground,  
That can with me such part of sorrow beare,  
Thrise happie I that such a mate haue found,  
VVose soule woes mourning gowne alike doth weare,  
Sweet sorrow which my fainting breast doth feed,  
And with new cause of grieve new ioy doth breed.

Further he comes, when soone he sees a cell,  
A little clowdie cell scarce taking light,  
In which one only wofull wight did dwell,  
That in the mortall world did not delight,  
But still with teares vnto his prayers fell,  
Mourning full deeply what he did not right,  
And still perswades his care-encompassed minde,  
That on the earth it could no pleasure finde.

True, true (quoth *Algier*) no ioy there is,  
That may delight the burnded soule of man:  
Sorrow doth streightest leade the minde to blisse,  
VVhence perfect ioy and happines began.  
VVherefore good Sire (and if I speak not misse)  
Since I so rightly haue this fortune wan,  
Let vs together here vnknown goe,  
Telling each other of vncured woe.

Let vs perswade the wandring passenger  
VVith morall precepts mortifying the minde,  
In sunder all his former ioyes to teare,  
And bid him mourne for that his soule hath find,  
Telling him neuer can his faults be cleare,  
Vnles his former thred he doe vnwinde,  
VVhich leades vnto the labyrinth of hell,  
VVhere nere returning ghosts downe damned fell.



## *Vertues Historie.*

Agreed (quoth he) and these clowdes of mine eyes  
Shall from their vaults in fertill showers fall,  
To fructuate the earth that barren lyes,  
Those earthly soules I meane, to grace to call,  
That life is fullest farre of miseries,  
VVhom sharpest miserie doth neuer gall :  
For pleasure seemes some solace forth to bring,  
But deadly it doth pearce with Scorpion sting.

Thus they conioynd begin to ambulate,  
And when they meet a wandring pilgrim-wight,  
Then doe they tell mans miserable state,  
How pleasures light is but a blackest night,  
How nothing that we doe can quench the hate,  
VVhich heauenly powres doe beare, but in despite  
Of earth and what the chained hurt may draw,  
Make to our lawles hearts a new-found law.

Plunge deepe in teares to wash thy spotted skin,  
In *Iordans* waters seuen times thee clense,  
To purge the leprosie that lyes within :  
Let sighs still offer vp a sweet incense,  
And where with soule contagion of sin,  
Those filthie fumes haue wrought the soules offence:  
There let that heauenly sacrifice repaire,  
And make the rined soule twice brighter faire.

Contemne the world, where nought but griefe is found,  
VVhere sighs the ayre, and sorrow is the food,  
Eternall teares the drinke, and howles the sound,  
VVhose gastly notes we heare, while dropping blood  
Makes seas of woe within our heart abound,  
And discontent the fire, our selues the wood :  
From whose great flames black vapours doe arise,  
VVhich turnd to clowds doe raine downe from our eyes.  
But

## *Vertues Historie.*

But lie below where neuer tempest blowes,  
Seeke out some narrow place where thou maist weepe,  
VVhere solitarines inuested goes :  
On day remember grieffe, in silent sleepe  
Dreame of thy faults, and those deserued woes,  
VVhich in a prison doe thy sad thoughts keepe :  
No thunder may thy cottage ouerturne,  
Nor thus bedewd with teares can lightning burne.

VVhile mightie Cedars feeble the tempests wrack,  
Each little sharme as winters timeles frost,  
Makes them all bare, and doth vncloth their back,  
VVhile they below smile at their garments lost,  
Each of their faults and each vnlawfull act  
Is seene to all, and they are learned most,  
VVhich in these great mens crimes a lesion reede,  
And tell their fellowes any lawles deede.

VVhile we in silence passe our silent dayes,  
No ill on earth nor sorrow after death,  
VVe feare not enuious tongues, nor black dispraise,  
VVhile they (though soothed in this liuely breath)  
After their time are punisht many wayes,  
Each swelling heart his hate vnburdeneth,  
And wisheth that the earth may heavy lie,  
And presse them deeply with her grauitie.

Thus passing soorth a rufull sight they view,  
VVhere many hung vpon a crossing tree :  
O these (quoth they) no more earths woe shall rew,  
Thrise happie easde of mortall miserie:  
VVe haue a mightie Ocean yet anew,  
Through which our tossed ships to port must flie,  
Brought to the summe of great felicitie.



## *Vertues Historie.*

Further they goe when comes a down-cast wight,  
VVhose face the Sunne had dide with sunnie black:  
O friends(quothe)and can you take delight  
On earth,while heau'ns great pleasures you doe lack?  
Come,come each man breath vp his ending spright,  
Before foule sin it driue to deadly wrack:  
Send vp to heauen a soule,ere sin it get,  
Intangled in his nere-dissolued net.

O cease (quothe they) to make an ouerflow  
Ouer the bounds of our ny-drown'd mindes:  
This worlds vncertaintie we well doe know,  
VVho so seekes ought,nought but despayre he findes,  
And these our earthly bodies sinking low,  
In mancipate of shame our soules doe binde:  
Our Sunne with clouds is darkned in the rise,  
The noone is black,but brightest when he dyes.

Since then the fates our meeting thus ordaind,  
Let vs not seeke to teach what each doth see:  
But let him happiest be most soules that gaind,  
Franchising them to immortalitie:  
Here will we tell how that the soule is paind,  
Laden with earthly things,not euer free,  
Before the bodies seruice they reiect,  
And here we'le counsell them to that effect.

Agreed,they fram'd full many a wooden crosse,  
And digd vp pooles and many other wayes,  
VVhen they perswade them to this gaining losse,  
The worlds losse gaine,which gaine our soule imbayes  
In happy rest where neuer tempests tosse:  
But sweet content our soules in quiet layes,  
VVhere *Aeol* dares not foorth his seruants send,  
VVhere ending wo,woes heire doth neuer end.

CANT.

# Vertues Historie.

## CANT. 5.

*The Hermite tells Alotus Tragedie,  
His wicked deeds and filthy Inuarie:  
And Cipribe there learns felicitie,  
But Erosel still plagues with crueltie  
Pirinoes soule, whose craft when they had found,  
They stript her clothes, and to the steed her bound.*

**H**Aples that wight within whose bowels lye  
The deep-dreacht poysons of vncured vice,  
Nor any Antidote can helpe apply,  
To whose soules cure no leach-art will suffice,  
But tossed in the waues from any eye,  
Payes desperate his soules vnmatched price:  
But happy they awake from sleepe of night,  
To see the blessed dayes thought-cheering light.

Which self scene blisse new-changed Cipribe,  
Hath by her gentle-smiling fortune gaine:  
So they that in a parfum'd house doe dwell,  
The parfum'd odour after long retaine;  
And wicked chaind with those that vse doe well,  
Haue from their wicked customes soone refraine:  
The horse whose back the tamer oft bestrides,  
At length with easie pace full gently rides.

After the Giant-fight when downe he threw,  
The filthy sonnes which *Alotus* bore,  
And those same monsters great *Themistocles* flew,  
Spoyling those wolues which all the passers tare,  
From their black mansions he his feete withdrew,  
And with the Ladies in his way doth fare:  
Freeing each wretch from his vnworthie paine,  
Restoring them vnto their rest againe.



## *Vertues Historie.*

Atlength they past where they all wondring spide  
A little rocky forme, whence did arise  
A fruitfull issuing streame, that still did slide  
From out the hollow stone in ample wise:  
Fast by a little cabinet they eyde,  
Whither desirous of some nouelties,  
They goe enquiring what these things mought bee,  
VVhich they so strange and neuer-heard did see.

VVhen by a crany there they silent view,  
An old age-worne-out father that with beades  
Praying full deeply, seem'd some gift to sue  
Of the great king, when still he earnest reades,  
And letting downe his beades sayes prayer new:  
Thus he his lifes cold Autumne-yeares doth leade,  
Nor caring for the world nor worldly wealth,  
But his beloued soules beloued health.

When streight *Themistos*; Sir, without offence,  
If tell you may, pray tell the mysterie  
Of yonder stone, and if oft recompence  
Can quite, I pray my kindnes proue and trie:  
Sir, your request (quoth he) doth grieue my sence,  
With new memoriall of this historie:  
Yet though each word doe bring with him a teare,  
You shall my storie and sad fortune heare.

VVeeping and speaking thus the mourner sayes:  
VWhere now vast rudenes shewes her rugged face,  
Here on these plaines shone in the former dayes,  
The stateliest walls that ere with glories grace,  
Send to the world their sayre prospectiue rayes,  
The place to them gaue worth, they to the place,  
That twixt both worths farre worthiest they were scene:  
O that as once they were they now had beene.

Here

## *Vertues Historie.*

Here dwelt (vnworthie farre here for to dwell)  
My brother (why should I him brother call?)  
*Astus* height, that nere-recured, fell  
Into the snares of vice (O haples fall!)  
Nothing but luxurie did please him well,  
Drinking and feasting and consuming all:  
His belly was the ship whereto he set  
All marchandize that he could euer get.

Like to the yawning mouth of vgly *Dis*,  
That euer gapes still hungry for his pray,  
Where sinking downe into the black *Abyffe*,  
The pained soules their sinnes deare tribute pay:  
Such was the neuer-satiat gulfe of his,  
Wherein still soules of beasts he fresh did lay:  
VVhen to extinguish his thirsts raging fire,  
VVhole haruests he of prest-grapes doth require.

Once when the Sunne began for to release  
His teames, all weary with their daily paine,  
Came by a godly father, whom he prayes  
His castles lodging for a night to daigne,  
Though loth he were so much to yeeld to ease,  
Yet by requests here now he will remaine:  
In is he gone to take his nightly rest,  
Meaning to lodge within this *Pythoes* nest.

Hunger the vulture that on euery maw  
Bites with her meager teeth her wombe to fill,  
Bids them to yeeld to common natures law,  
And satisfie her not resisted will:  
The father who before then neuer saw  
The dish where rawish blood downe did distill,  
But *Pythagorean* like with gardens fed,  
VVonders to see so many creatures dead.

**Fie**



## *Vertues Historie.*

Fie shame (quoth he) to kill the harmeles beast,  
That with his fleece maintaines our vestiment,  
And with this bloodie meate to make a feast,  
VVhich nature made for a more good intent :  
VVhat hath the ox descriu'd, that still opprest  
VVith heauie yoke in paine his yeares hath spent ?  
Or what the sheepe, the sheepe that innocent,  
VVhich neuer cries for slaughter vp ypent ?

Sauing your tale (quoth he) and taking wine,  
*Afotus* in a full carouse doth swill :  
But he whose griued heart doth much repine,  
To see him with those bloodie meates to fill  
His rau'ning panch, goes forward to diuine ;  
Telling that for his soule this feast was ill,  
Who in deepe hell for penance long shall fast,  
Guiltie to thinke vpon his pleasure past.

Thus long he spoke when downe *Afotus* lyes,  
Whom deep-fetcht draughts had ouer-nie opprest,  
When streight the Sire from out the castles flies :  
Whence fled, he falls vpon his humbled breast,  
And zealous to the king of heauen cries,  
Turning his face vnto the darkned East,  
Praying to shew some iudgement on his sin,  
Before more soules this wicked vice might win.

No sooner hath he prayd, but vanisht quite  
The old foundations of the ruinde walls,  
Like to a bird that flieth from the fight,  
And in some farre remoued valley falls,  
Nothing appeares, but this vngodly wight,  
Who while for helpe all cursing deeply calls,  
Into this stone was chang'd, whence still arise  
New issuing streames of superfluities.

And

## *Vertues Historie.*

And here stay I, that to the rising Sunne,  
For that his soule full many prayers say;  
Beginning still, nor euer will haue done,  
Vntill to rest his soule transport I may:  
This said; downe riuolets of teares doe run,  
And streight all vehement begins to pray:  
A ruthfull sight it was, for deepest smart  
Was sure ingrauen in his grieved hart,

But now is *Cipribe* quite shapte a new,  
Sorrow within her heart doth tirannize,  
Her former pleasure she doth deeply rew;  
And be their Gods which see our vanities,  
Quoth she; rewarding men their sins great due,  
Or is there any heauenly paradise,  
Where euerlasting haruest shall repay  
The fruites of good which here on earth we lay?

This said, she doth the aged Sire request  
To tell the blessed newes she nere did heare:  
Who all the rites that holy men profest,  
And who vnhappy, and who blessed were,  
Which was the way to euiternall rest,  
Where was the place of horror and of feare:  
To her in largest tolde where we will leaue  
This new made Saint her lessons to receiue.

Now good *Pyrino* must I tell thy wo,  
The mighty wrack, thy weary barke sustaines,  
Whom *Erofel* thus tumbleth to and fro,  
With boistrous winds of her infected braines;  
Needes must thou to thy haples fortune goe,  
When desperate rider holds thy guiding raines:  
Losse of a loue, in loue is greatest death,  
But mocking of his losse twise burdeneth.



## *Vertues Historie.*

After he had sung forth the historie,  
VVherein his Tragedies he did reueale:  
*Erofel* seemes some comfort to applie,  
And where she poyson laies, she seemes to heale,  
Like the *Hiena*, that will sorriest crie,  
VVhen she in cruellst manner meanes to deale:  
The Adder in his scenting kisse doth sting,  
And mischief lies within most flattering.

Now she perswades to lift his wearied seete,  
And to his Lady turne his dolefull course;  
Perchance (quoth she) some fireames of hope doe fleete,  
VVhich may quench out the flame, ere growing worse;  
VVho neuer ventures, prize shall neuer meete,  
And he his owne vnwillingnes will curse:  
That while occasion turnes her hairy face,  
Staies nor her neuer-back returning pace.

Now when the darkened evening calls to rest,  
VVhen Stars all ready in their watch doe stand,  
VVhen he doth of his loue remember least;  
Then comes she in, and questions doth demaund,  
To ouercharge the wight so deepe opprest,  
To make him dreame of things like furies brand,  
In the infernall nookes of gaping hell,  
Torturing the soules which downe condemned fell.

So lankish famine gnawing on her breast,  
Tires *Erisifon* with a restles drought,  
And makes him euer hungring for a feast;  
VVhen yet that swallowed feast but grieues his thought,  
That his luxurious end so soone hath ceast,  
Eu'n such loue famine hath this Tiger brought:  
To this ore burning yomth, within whose soule  
A thousand *Sisiphus* their restles burdens roule.

Sometimes

## *Vertues Historie.*

Sometimes in womans cloathes she would appeare,  
In mightie shadowes to affright him more,  
And *Bellamies* diuineſt image beare,  
And play an Anticke by his chamber dore :  
VVhen ſtraight the louer thinks that ſhe was there,  
And in purſuite out from his bed he tore :  
She flies, he now remaines of all bereft,  
Like one whom Fayries company hath left.

One night ſhe came to play her wonted game,  
When he all deſp'rate in a mightie rage  
Drew forth his blade, and brandiſhing the ſame,  
Betwixt them made an vncouth marriage,  
And made her arme giue to her head the blame,  
That fram'd ſuch plaies vpon ſo ſtrange a ſtage :  
For he deepe ſtroke vnto the center-bone,  
O haples ſtroke it had no further gone.

Like *Cadmus* Dragon in the *Theban* caue,  
VVhen with his ſpeare he pierſt his writhed taylor,  
Begins within his den to rage and raue,  
And ſwelling deeply meanes then to preuaile,  
VVhen with vnited force at him he draue,  
Such rancor doth her cancred heart affaile :  
As *Ioues* great Eagle leſſer foule doth rent,  
To maſſaker him ſo, her heart is bent.

But now the fates thy whiter threede haue ſpun,  
Foule *Ereſel*, now hath thy ſhady loome,  
All died in pitch her grieſly birth begun,  
Masking miſfortunes ſhade and haples bloome:  
Now hath thy night vailde thy moſt orient ſunne,  
Blacke chance to worſer fortune doth thee doome :  
Caſt downe *Loues* Scepter, tirannize no more,  
The wings are ſcorcht which once thy flight vp bore.



## *Vertues Historie.*

When chearing *Phabus* had his fiery steeds  
Breath forth bright lightning in the rising morne:  
*Pirino* on whose heart grim sorrow seeds,  
Left his sad couch in which no rest is borne,  
Now easier fate his happier chaunce areedes,  
Loue doth not pricke him as it wont beforne:  
Whose presage drieth vp the ice of smart,  
And makes a verdant spring within his hart.

Vpon his foaming Palfrey doth he mount,  
When straight his surie hath his heart in chase:  
But let the cottages make great account,  
When *Boreas* turnes his cloud-in-wrapped face,  
This Castell now all stormes wrath doth surmount,  
It scornes to stooping now his height debase:  
Goe *Erofel* those iawes in sunder teare,  
Whose poyson to no worth their edge doth reare.

Foreward they trauell in appoynted way,  
Driuing the tediousnes of shortned miles,  
She still is egged to the Knights decay;  
And with new stinging tales his cares defiles,  
While nothing can her words his minde afray:  
But now a sudden noyse doth end her wiles,  
Like to the humming of great swarmes of Bees,  
VWhich in this sorte vnto their hearing flees.

Goe *Aspicke* goe, which with thy venomd sting  
Defil'st the puritie which nature gaue,  
VVithin thy head a thousand fiends doe ring,  
And whispering counsell doe thy thoughts deprave,  
Let mischief thee vnto thy buriall bring,  
Or robbers lay thee in some vncouth caue:  
VWhere thou entombd in eternall night,  
Mast not defile the toxicated light.

VWhile

## *Vertues Historie.*

VWhile thou my soule whom spots of sinne doe staine,  
Vanish from this thy worldly pilgrimage,  
And to the highest powers of heauen complaine,  
Thou didst vnwilling spoyle thy heritage,  
VWhile as the sunne who knowes my inward paine,  
Viewing the wofull offspring of my rage:  
Shall witnes to blacke *Radaman* that I,  
A penitentiall sinner fainting dye.

VWhile thou fell hagge, whose foule corrupted minde  
Doth glut his thought with sight of others griefe,  
Maist wander haples neuer helpe maist finde,  
But driuen from thy hauen of reliefe,  
Tosse vp and downe with some vncertaine winde,  
Not euer trusted neuer get beliefe:  
And I appoynted to a fatall end,  
VWill dye that life, whose death is liues deare friend.

Following the sound vnto a bush they came,  
VWhom when he saw: and doest thou *lue* (quoth he)  
And rooke his sworde and would haue pearst the dame:  
But straight *Pirine*; pray Sir patient be,  
VWhat euer your offended thoughts can blame,  
I deeply vow shall be redrest by me:  
Onely bewray the reason of your wrath,  
And who the author is of all your scath.

O Sir (quoth he) this is a woman borne,  
Though falsely hid in seeming mans disguise,  
VWhose beautie as his badge my heart hath worne:  
VVoe to the time I heard her flatteries,  
For since that time my soule was still forlorne,  
Of th'Angell hew of my faire infancies:  
I tought the pitch which in her corps doe lye,  
By which the vestalls of my heart doe dye.



## *Vertues Historie.*

For this was she whose once beloued face  
VVrought deepe affections in my yeelding minde;  
And ouer rulde me with her pleasing grace,  
VWhile in this loue, her tractable I finde,  
And all my words doth seeme glad to imbrace,  
VWhich doth in double bands my dutie binde:  
Her did I worship, Idoll of my hart,  
And my most dearest soules more dearer part.

Now are we ioyned each in giuing troth,  
And haue appoynted certaine time to bride,  
One was the minde, one was the thought of both,  
VWhen I was sad, then she her light would hide,  
And seeme as if to ioy her soule was loth,  
Both in vnitng of their loues abide:  
But this so high a sea of rising loue,  
Soone to a lowest ebbe then ere did proue.

She seemde like *Phaeton* in her desire,  
And needs would driue the chariot of Sunne,  
Carying her Sunnes to ouercharging fire,  
VWhen thus to me her dolefull speech began:  
O loue whose heart the seate where I aspire,  
Hath with so deepe a loue my louing wonne:  
O be not hard which Nature soft hath made,  
Nor let the spring of kindnes scarce borne fade,

Here is my heart whom thy Sunnes loue doth melt,  
But it like waxe more melting more doth hang,  
VWhich loues comburing zone full deepe hath felt,  
This heart which in my breasts faire temple rang,  
Vnto thy seruice still; and still hath dealt  
Faithfull in loue, though thorough many a pang:  
Ease it and me from such a sweltring zone,  
VWhere thirstie still; still water we haue none.

This

## *Vertues Historie.*

This heart all bloodles let it be thy white,  
And shoote therewith thy arrowes piercing feele;  
Or if in his confusion thou delite,  
Then torture it vpon a racking wheele,  
Or let thy swordes sharpe edge thine ire acquite,  
And let it any torment|plagued feele:  
Onely first pierce it with a dart of loue,  
Then all the instruments of anger proue.

Sweete loue, one onely Nectar-drop I craue,  
Doe not denie me one: one is not much,  
Though to thy loue thus I am bound a slaue,  
Yet litle meat to feede me doe not grutch,  
And with one morsell me from dying saue,  
O cruellst death of all, whose death is such:  
O didst thou see my heart, how it doth beate  
And pant for hunger, sure it should haue meate.

Perchaunce the peoples voyce thou much doest feare,  
That's like a winde which neuer man can see,  
VVhose idle rumor many things doth beare  
VVhich are vntrue, she euery where doth flee,  
The best doe often her worst colours weare,  
And on her sable pinsons listd be:  
Beside our mariage, to be made ere long,  
VVill strengthen al the breach, & make it twice as strong.

Now in my heart Reason and Loue did fight,  
Reason with ensigne red, Loues en signe pale,  
My face the field where they doe wreake their spight,  
Sometimes Loues ensigne vanquished, downe would fall:  
Then Reasons colour plaied most in fight,  
And in a blushing red enuellop'd all:  
Straight Loue recovering his former spight,  
Kept Reason downe, and claime the place for right.

Then



## *Vertues Historie.*

Then said I to my soule, how dost thou kill  
The onely childe I haue sweete Chastitie,  
The Iudge for murder damne to torments will,  
Thy wicked thoughts? O whither dost thou flye?  
O doe not leaue thy goodly fort, vntill  
VVith these thy holy goods thou needs must dye:  
But then my soule that scorde a woman stay,  
Opend the Castell doore and made her way.

Now am I robbing from my spoyled Saint,  
Those milke white robes wherewith she was araide,  
And with this sacriledge my soule doe taint,  
My goddesse in her shrine no longer staide:  
VVhen as she saw her seruants faith to faint,  
And on her turtle wings her selfe she laide:  
VVhen to my thoughts she gaue her latest will,  
That still hereafter shame her seate should fill.

Now is my garden naked of his flower,  
Whom I before with care did till and dresse,  
And gaue it to her for my chiefeſt dower,  
The vtmost toll of all that I possesse:  
But then her wanton lookes began to lower,  
And filthie figure of ingratelnesse:  
Leauing my bower vnto the world she fled,  
Since when with horror all my daies I led.

And here a Pilgrime haue I spent my life,  
My life growne olde with care and guiltie shame;  
VVhere now blacke melancholy is my wife,  
Harb'ring my thoughts when they for succor came,  
Scorning the world, whose sorrowes are so rife,  
VVhere one howres ioy doth bring one ages blame:  
VVhile musing thoughts which on my wife I bred,  
Doe finde me meate on which I still haue fed.

Thus

## *Vertues Historie.*

Thus hath he sayd, while guiltie *Erofell*  
Did oftentimes assay from thence to flie:  
But good *Pirino* that her guiles did smell,  
Made her the listning of the tale aby:  
Which when he ended, both vpon her fell,  
And stript the cloathes of her hypocrisie:  
VVhen by the fresh apparance of the wound,  
*Pirino* all her craft and guile had found.

Then bound they fast her naked armes behinde,  
And to the horse her feete they strongly tide,  
And let her goe where she shall neuer finde  
Rest nor reliefe, but still in horror ride:  
Like to the *Affrick* Mares that on the winde  
Engender, and their kinde haue multiplide:  
So doth this furie on the emptie ayre  
Breed guiltie shame, and stinging deepe despayre.

She scoures like *Auster* on the sandie plaines,  
And when a farre she vieweth any man,  
She turnes her course and flieth thence amaine,  
VVhile as the Sunne with his still scorching bran,  
Dies her quaint face in a farre blacker graine,  
And her deformed haire downe still doth fan,  
VVhile on her heart sharpe hunger still doth feede,  
Quenching her thirst with teares that euer bleede.

Now doe *Pirino* and this Knight consent,  
To wander through the Ile as errant Knights,  
And sweare to keepe their martiall thoughts vnbeent  
From Ladies seruice, or those loues delights,  
Though I still had them from their vow relent,  
Telling the worth of all those femall wights,  
VVhen they from me all raging spurd amaine,  
Swearing that womans loue I nere should gaine.

Q

CANT.



## *Vertues Historie.*

### CANT. 6.

*Faire Cypribe doth proud Orguillo meete,  
And wins his helmet by her martiall might,  
Who lay low conquerd humbly at her feete,  
And with a Tiger fiercely she doth fight,  
And her lones tombe and death she now doth see,  
Themistos doth a Knight from bondage free.*

**A**S doth the Elixer with his secret power,  
Turne baser mettals into purest gold:  
Or as the comfort of a moystning shower,  
Reuiues the flowers which downe their heads did hold,  
VVhose parched rootes barren drouth did deuoure:  
So doth the speech which he to her hath told,  
Clenfing the drosse from her defiled minde,  
As mistie fogges with a North scouring winde.

And now *Themistos* will depart away,  
Sundring their diuers wayes vnlike euent:  
And *Cypribe*, whose soule in new array,  
Goes forth to helpe the poore and innocents,  
Is marching early by the blush of day,  
With speare in rest and shield fit for defence:  
Meaning to teach the worse what she doth learne,  
Or with her sword to make them dearly earne.

Forth gone, she meetes vpon a mountaines head  
A stately Knight that proud vpbores his crest,  
His footcloth all with starres bespangled,  
And on his shield all azurde was imprest  
An Eagle, or, aboue a Sunne was leyd,  
VVhereon his fastned eybeames still did rest:  
*Sic oculos* his word, the world to tell,  
That so on high his haughtie minde did dwell.

Behind

## *Vertues Historie.*

Behind him on a lingring asse there rode  
A sober man, downe by whose belt was tide  
An inkhorne pendant, from his neck there yode  
A thinnest robe not cut of any fide,  
VVhereon his poesie patchingly was sowde,  
A bird that pickt a Serpents iawes all wide:  
*Dura necessitas* the word, to show,  
Hunger and want did make them both doe so.

This was a poet whom this loftie Knight,  
Maintainde to write his verse ennobled gifts:  
For he to ground full many foes had dight,  
Vpheaving them from out their saddle rests,  
All which in loftie verse this hand did write,  
And sure I storie was that Muses hefts,  
Should thus be prentises to seruile deede,  
But rocks cannot resist sharpe pearcing neede.

Now are they met, when quoth that loftie mate,  
Giue me thy sword, least this my breath confound  
Thy blasted soule, if once I wreake my hate:  
When nay, replide she, things so hardly found,  
May not be giuen to each that big will prate:  
But fight for it, and first we will compound,  
That who orecomes shall this for reward beare,  
He shall the helmet haue his foe did weare.

He is agreed: now are they set for race,  
And fiercely runne each against th'others breast:  
So haue I seene when *Neptune* with his mace,  
Hath made the raging floods with stormes opprest,  
Two hugie Argoes with most tumbling pace,  
Too much with tossing tempests ouerprest,  
Thunder against his fellowes bellowing side,  
VVhile in the gulfe downe swallowed both they slide.



## *Vertues Historie.*

Both tumbled downe, they doe renew with hand  
The fight, which on their palfraies not preuailes,  
Each on the other laies his steely brand,  
And where they see defence most surest failes,  
There streight their cleauing weapon fixt doth stand :  
At last *Orgullo* on her helmet nailes  
VVith mightie force his plate-intrenching blade,  
And on her head a skarring wound he made.

She moued with the rigour of the blow,  
Plucks in one stroke the force of all her might,  
And on his shoulder downe her blade doth throw,  
VVhich sliding thence his arme doth sharply bite:  
VVhich wounded, doth his fencing targe let go,  
VVhile she doth claime her victories due right :  
He willing, but not able to resist,  
Doth suffer her to doe what ere she list.

Downe doth she take his helmet from his head,  
VVhose lostie plume vpon the highest set,  
Told that his proud heart would to heauen haue fled,  
But that the drosse of his foule corps did let :  
And streight her helmet she vncouered,  
VVhen from her crowne the curled coronet,  
In which she pleated had her tangled haire,  
Fell from her head downe playing with the aire.

*Orguillo* shaming now to see a maide  
That got the conquest ore his quailed might,  
Himselfe vpon his palfrey straight he laide,  
And spurring mainly vanisht out of sight,  
His peny poet hastie after made,  
But neuer was he since seene by the light :  
Yet often hath his poet since been knowne,  
Nor yet from out the earth his name is flowne.

Now

## *Vertues Historie.*

Now *Cypribel* still followeth on her way,  
Lead by a beaten path vpon a plaine,  
VVhen streight she sees, as farre as see she may,  
A Tiger, hunting seem'd for bloodie gaine,  
VVho thinking that she hath espide a pray,  
VVith yawning iawes runnes hoping to attaine:  
And with the Lady ramping she doth meete,  
VVho with her sword her grisly foe doth greeete.

Such in the *Nemean* Forrest was the fight,  
VVhen *Alcid* with the hideous Lion strauē:  
Such was the battell when in furious spight,  
*Iason* the fire breathing monsters draue  
Vnto their end, by *Colchis* magicks might:  
And such was *Theseus* when in writhed caue,  
VVith puissant force and deeply graued dint,  
His wrath on *Minotaur* he did imprint.

The Tiger bites, she cuts, but now at last  
With griping teeth he hath vnloosd a plate:  
Where when his iawes he ment next time to cast,  
Drawing her bodies sent, he doth abate  
The dreadfull furie which is ouer-past,  
And fawning seem'd that was so fierce of late:  
VVhen straight he back returnes his wonted way,  
And seem'd to follow did the Lady pray.

For when he softly went, he turnes his eyes  
Back to the dame, whom nothing feare dismayd,  
But streight she followes him, that humble wise  
Lead to a Sepulcher this errant mayd:  
A Sepulcher it is that couered lyes  
VVith helmets and with shields all ouer layd,  
VVhich from the passing Knights this Tiger tore,  
And for a couering to his master bore.



## *Vertues Historie.*

This is a Knight whose thoughts like to the skie,  
VWere turnde about this Ladies beauries pole,  
A vertuous Knight he was, whom wantonlie  
This Lady in her fond youth did controle:  
But now his losse she mourneth inwardlie,  
That she hath sent away so sweet a soule:  
But when to cinders all consumed are,  
Too late then fall the watric teares of care.

This Knight, when *Cypribe* was fled away,  
Wandred through many a dale and weary hill,  
Seeking his wretched sight on her to lay;  
But she whom deepe disdaine too much did fill,  
Flies from his sight, and seekes an vncouth way:  
VWhen he his labour neuer left, vntill  
All in despayre he came vnto this plaine,  
VWhich by a forrest neerely doth remaine.

Here when he came, he heard a hollow grone,  
VWhich from some caue did seeme to volley out:  
VWhen following the sound, he now is gone  
Vnto the wood, where searching all about,  
He saw a doore which placed was vpon,  
To trap the wild beasts by some rustick lout:  
VWhich when he opened forth a Tiger came,  
That to a flattring looke his face did frame.

Nor euer would he leaue his dearest Lord,  
Who ment ere long to leaue himselfe and all:  
But serues him faithfully at bed and bord,  
VVatching by night, by day abroad he stalle  
Such forrest pray as did the wood afford,  
Or he could get in great *Sylvanus* hall:  
But nothing could his former ioy reduce,  
VWhose only cates are on her forme to muse.

He

## *Vertues Historie.*

He powres foorth teares when downe the Tiger lies,  
And with a wrinched face doth seeme to weepe:  
Sometimes in hope to flatter fantasies,  
He with his eyes doth woo sweet banisht sleepe,  
VVhen softly wrapt, the beast doth close his eyes,  
Yet not full closde, a watch he still doth keepe,  
That rockie heart he hath, whom could not moue  
This Tigers and this mans so fruitles loue.

But now he sees where death with greedie spade,  
Meanes vp to dig the minerals of his hart,  
And his soules treasure dearely to inuade:  
VVhen readie and prepared to depart,  
He tooke a stone, on which he grauing made  
The wofull ditty of his pinching smart,  
And wrote his stony loue on marble stone,  
That to the grauer seem'd for pittie mone.

Receiue thou stone the issues of my woe,  
Of which blood-issue now my heart must die:  
And you black words shall forth testators goe,  
Of this my will to her that hence doth flie:  
And if you see her, for me tell her so,  
That in you all my testament doth lie:  
Tell that on you I haue ingrau'd by art,  
That art and nature could not on her hart.

Tell her how still I lou'd her till my night,  
And then I wrote to you, you should her loue:  
Tell how that teares my eyes did euer fright  
Till now, and then I bad you springs to moue:  
Tell how I mou'd you with my pensils might,  
VVhen her my pensue heart in vaine did proue:  
How on my graue I grau'd these things to her,  
My selfe the grauesman and my selfe the beare.

These



## *Vertues Historie.*

These things he writing dide, and dying wrote,  
And left that storie tomb-stone for his hearse:  
When he no sooner past black *Scixes* bote,  
But streight the Tiger with his clawes did pearce  
The trenched earth as deepe as ere he mote,  
Wherein he put the corse and heauie verse,  
And from the Knights their helmets still would teare,  
Which for a couering he would thither beare.

Now when the Lady came vnto the graue,  
She rouled thence the armes that on him lay:  
Whom when she saw, from out her eyes she draue  
A gushing flood that did his face imbay  
In siluer streames, which dying he did craue,  
Yet could not gaine it in his dying day:  
But now his face all sprinkled with her dew,  
Secmes looking fresh againe and liuing new.

Sweet Nectar teares *Electrus* pretious drops,  
Wound saluing balme, whose sweet infusion  
The bloody festring or an issue stops,  
*Calestis-aqua*, whose sweet potion  
Makes winter boughs renew their naked tops:  
*Aeson Medeas* incantation,  
Which powred life into the wrinkled eld,  
And plants the tree Deaths woodman downe had feld.

Then takes she vp the grauen marble-stone,  
And through her watric spectacles she reedes,  
Which makes the letters three which erst were one:  
O then (quoth she) of you there is no needes,  
Vnles three hearts I had for all to mone,  
My heart for one enough alreadie bleedes:  
O cruell heart that in so sweet a chace,  
Couldest deny to turne thy flying face.

This

## *Vertues Historie.*

This fiercest Tiger seemes to rue his case,  
Thou wroughtst this miserie whom he doth rue:  
He with the earth hath couered his face,  
Thou didst vnclasp his heart, and there imbrue  
Thy tyrant-thoughts that had too little grace:  
These armes for shelter he about him drue,  
When I denide my armes about him wreath,  
Which might orecome the surquedrie of death.

But now she leaueth this funereall song,  
And causeth on his graue a stone be set,  
While in the Forrest by the trees among,  
There she hath fram'd a syluan cabinet,  
Vowing to make the Knights that passe along,  
To pay their shields to quit her sorrowes det:  
But vaine, thy beauties shield would once haue done,  
More then the heape of shields thou now hast wonne.

Where leaue we her to penance for her loue,  
And turne our driuing sailes another way,  
Searching *Themistos* forth, that now doth roue  
Towards the maiden towne, where streight a fray  
He hath begun, and with his fauchion droue  
The quailed citizens to their decay,  
Hewing and slicing with his glistering blade,  
Such spoyle with lambes haue rau'ning Lions made.

This is a towne whither a wanton dame,  
That fled an exile through the loathed land,  
And to these parts with her attendants came,  
Where streight this goodly towne they tooke in hand,  
And in a little space vpraisde this frame,  
Where that same Ladie Queene did still command,  
And many lawes she made, whose greater part  
Art quite extinguisht, nor without desert.

R

And



## *Vertues Historie.*

And this was one, that euerie Lady might  
Two husbands haue, and he that did refuse  
To haue a partner in his loues delight,  
Should beare that paine that womens heads should chuse.  
One time it chaust when darkned was the light,  
The Sunne downe sinking low from mortall viewes,  
VVhen to this towne arriu'd a valiant Knight,  
VVhere with his Lady will he spend the night.

There had he past that night and many a day,  
Blinded with pleasure of so fayre a place,  
And ment a longer time to make delay:  
But while a citizen that saw the face  
Of that fayre dame, where beauties beames doe play,  
So rauishing and with so pleasing grace,  
That his burnt heart was scorcht with too much heat,  
Feeling no moysture where the flame was great.

And seeing no good salve to heale his sore,  
VVhere chastitie the Surgeon should bee,  
Vpon the womens law he trusted more,  
And vnto that his only hope doth flee:  
VVherewith he warnes the Knight, who not forbore  
His lightning wrath, but quickly makes them see  
How ill a cause they had, and with his sword  
Hundreds of soules on *Charons* bote doth bord.

But multitudes his valour much opprest,  
And tooke him prisoner: so a Lyonesse  
VVhom from his young a ranger hath supprest,  
Caught in the subtile gins of craftinesse,  
Bound in an iron grate doth quiet rest,  
Helples despayring and all comfortlesse:  
But when his libertie he once doth finde,  
He deeply shewes the furie of his minde.

Now

## *Vertues Historie.*

Now is this Knight captiue, and streight they call  
A Iurie all of women, that must sit  
To iudge this captiue gotten in their thrall :  
Some hags that meate in ten yeares did not bite,  
Scarfe able from their rustie couch to crall :  
Some whose downe sinking nose their chin did hit,  
And some deepe furrowed fogs with hollow eyes,  
On whom who looken ten months he sooner dyes.

These nod their heads like to a flock of geese,  
Consulting what must in this cause be done :  
VVhen forth there steps an old vnlusty peece,  
That twentie yeares hath neuer seene the Sunne,  
On whose furd chin did hang a budgie fleece,  
VVith filthie mosse and droffe all ouerrunne,  
VVhose gummes the palsie so to ods did set,  
That they their loosed teeth did all out set.

Quoth she, euen strip the youth that is so nice,  
And let him naked there before them stand,  
Bound to a post, that shall this once suffice :  
No sooner she this iudgement did command,  
But all about him runne like to the mice,  
VVhose troopes conloyned in an endles band,  
About the Bishop of great *Mentz* did runne,  
And on his corps an vncouth conquest wonne.

Now is he led vnto an open place,  
VVhere shameles creatures will his shame disclose :  
But by the way a Knight there comes a pace,  
Wondring a farre to see such troopes as those,  
And doth enquire why this so great disgrace  
Is offred him, and why he chained goes :  
They streight the manner of his storie tell,  
VVho to their words replide they did not well.



## *Vertues Historie.*

Then streight on him they rush, and left alone  
The prisoner, only one attending staves:  
Whom downe he throwing drew his fauchion,  
And on his masters throte it freely layes:  
This while the other Knight so much hath done,  
That many saw the latest of their dayes:  
And sinking downe to *Plutoes* smokie fort,  
To'd him they could not stay to see the sport.

So *Persus* of the Centaures hauock made,  
Cleauing their hoofie legs with steely dint,  
And *Stixes* banks with damned soules doth lade,  
As doe their Knights whose wrath will neuer stint,  
Vntill the edge of euer-hungrie blade,  
Shall with his bloodie seale each foman print,  
And make his passport currant downe to hell,  
Not hindred by the ghosts below that dwell.

The captiue now is freed, while downe they fall  
Like to vntimely fruit, whom blustering winde,  
Breaking from out his iron-prison wall,  
Strooke from the tree, and made new place to finde  
In lowest ground, that erst on boughes so tall,  
All lostily his proudest stem did binde:  
Dying into the dust he downe doth slide,  
Neuer to see his summer beauties pride.

CANT.

## Vertues Historie.

### CANT. 7.

*The brethren still renew their sharpe debate,  
Pirino viewes a fayre distressed dame,  
Whom cruell Knight had brought to wofull state:  
With whom vnto a castle soone he came,  
After he had reueng'd the bloodie deede,  
Quiting the bloodie man with bloodie meede.*

**W**Hen as the earths great palsie doth her moue,  
Shaking her bowels with an ayrie rent,  
It shiuers downe the Citadels aboute,  
And her great burthens all in peeces rent:  
But not so much as discord doth remoue,  
Whose quartan shaking in his continent,  
Feeds on the intrals of the stinging harts,  
And teares his bowels in tormented parts.

Which mightie earthquake now these brethren shooke,  
That with their swords each others limbes doe hew,  
And makes them like the ruddy morning looke,  
Embrude in sanguine and in purple hew:  
No time doth slide but one the other strooke,  
Dying the stayned earth with gory dew:  
The musick still in harmonie doth sing,  
While still their swords to others sides they fling.

Thus doe they hack and spoyle with grisly wounds,  
The vitall fountaines of their welling blood:  
Like to the Bore whom *Meleagers* hounds  
In *Calidons* forwasted fields withstood,  
Whose iron tuske with renting edge confounds  
The springs fayre fruits and summers growing food,  
Tearing the vine and *Bacchus* ensigne downe,  
And in his panch that sacred iuyce doth drowne.



## *Vertues Historie.*

Thus doe they cruelly their forces waste,  
Vntill two princes came vnto the place,  
Two princes that with loue each one imbrafte,  
Ioyned in strongest league and mightie grace,  
That in a louing heart could ere be plaste,  
No enuie could their plighted loued face:  
But like two doves that in the woods doe fly,  
Starue out themselves when as his mate doth dy.

They pitying to see that spitefull hate,  
Should thus distract the soules of tortur'd wights,  
VVent streight to part them from that sharpe debate:  
But they now swelling with vnbounded sprights,  
No whit the more their furie did abate,  
But exercising still their hatefull sprights,  
Vpon each other wreake their mightie wrath,  
And in each others gore their swords imbath.

Like mightie buls that in a small flock,  
Striue who should be the droues promoted head,  
VVith horny engines do their frontiers knock,  
That from their browes a purple streame downe bled,  
VVhile drumming still with mightie blowes they stroke,  
And with their fellows hurt their ire they fed,  
VVhen ramping fiercely on each others skull,  
Downe to the earth their carkasses they pull.

But now at length they haue disscuered  
These fighting brethren, and their swords vp lay,  
And euery prince with him one brother led,  
And parted thence vnto a diuers way:  
VVhen home this burden soone they caried,  
VVhose teeth yet gnash that this their bloodie fray  
VVas not full tried, and with venome swell  
Gainst those that parted them, though doing well.

And

## *Vertues Historie.*

And still doe egge these sworne friends to fight,  
Stirring so long to strife their burning mindes,  
That though no cause they had of their despight,  
Yet enuie still some secret reason findes:  
And they send challenges to try by might  
Their strife, no longer league their friendship bindes:  
But like two beares that from a keeper scape,  
Doe waste the fields with massacre and rape.

VVhere we will leaue to desolation,  
Those whom fell discord doth so much increase:  
And to *Pirine* will againe be gone,  
VVho marched forward still in great pretence,  
That Ladies seruice he would nere haue done:  
But he his formers sinne shall recompence,  
And ere I leaue him (so I loue your kinde)  
His heart and hands another way shall finde.

After the shameles *Erofels* defeat,  
VVhen with the pilgrime Knight he ioyned his way,  
They for aduentures strangest paths doe beate,  
Searching out works of valour euery day,  
VVhose haughtie mindes thinke nothing is so great,  
But with their puissance they'le ouerway:  
About whose boldest hearts encircled was,  
Strong mightie oke and thrice enfolded brasse.

Not long they forreind, till on plaine they spide  
A wofull sight as euer eye beheld,  
A Ladie that on ground all wounded lide,  
Fayrer then her the Sunne hath viewed feld,  
And more mishap did neuer dame betide:  
For she to ground with ruthles blow was feld,  
Like to the sweetest rose in haruest time,  
Is mowen downe in youths most lustie prime.

They



## *Vertues Historie.*

They rested not vntill they to her came,  
Vpon whose eyes death seemeth to arrest:  
And turning vp their Alabaster frame,  
Made death in loue with them that lou'd death best:  
But now those Knights did ransom fayre the dame,  
Barring her soule from such a heauie rest,  
And vp did binde the life dissoluing wound,  
VVho wept in blood, that it on her was found.

But now *Pirino* quite his oth forgate,  
And moued much with pitie, more with loue,  
Downe from his horse as light as winde he gate,  
And from the ground her quickly doth remoue,  
Cursing the sword, the hand, and cursed fate,  
That on this Lady crueltie did proue:  
O who can tell what verue hidden lyes,  
VVithin the charming of a Ladies eyes.

Now doth he wish that he the sword had beene,  
For to haue kist that Ladies downy brest:  
Or he were Balsamum to powre betweene  
The lips of that broad wound: where sweetest rest  
In beauties haruest yet lookes euer greene,  
And would from stony hearts haue teares exprest,  
To see so fayre a Ladie folly vside,  
And that same beautie which such wrong abuse.

Forth doe they goe to finde some resting place,  
VVhere they her deepe intrenched wound may dresse,  
VVhile still *Pirino* musing on her face,  
Studieth the astronomie of happinesse,  
VVhose starres doe leade vnto the port of grace,  
VVhere is inuested perfect blessednesse:  
The starres of her sweet eyes where beautie plaines,  
That wrongfull prison her in bonds detaines.

Forth

## *Vertues Historie.*

Forth doe they cary her their purposde way,  
VVhile still she lieth dumbe, no word doth flowe:  
From out the Oracle where Beautie lay,  
Silence in darknes all within doth goe,  
To keepe her whom sharpe paine holds for a pray,  
Subdued to pinching grieve and grievly woe:  
That filthie dragon keeps the garden gate,  
VVhere heauenly Roses flourished of late.

Now haue they spied a castell from a farre,  
VVhether with all their speede they forward make,  
Meaning to make that heauen of this starre,  
That makes all heau'n where her bright beames doe flake,  
But ere vnto the fort they arriued are,  
A new aduenture doth them overtake:  
Foure Knights doe meete them with their drawen swords,  
VVhose edges on their armes act Tragick wordes.

Now on a banke the Lady downe they set,  
And to the battell doe themselves addresse,  
VVhere with outrageous blowes each other beat,  
And on their foemen doe Reuenge impresse:  
At last one brustling in a furious heat,  
Ran through his mate, whom he his foe did gesse:  
The other quitting him, they downeward fell,  
Their bodies to the earth, their soules to hell.

VVhere we will leaue the other to their fight,  
And of this Ladies wofull storie tell:  
And what misfortune brought her to this plight,  
How to this gulfe of miserie she fell:  
But thinke the whiles that to the pilgrim Knight,  
*Pirino* still his fight continues well:  
And pray that he the victorie may win  
Here in this fray which they a fresh begin.

S

This



## *Vertues Historie.*

This Lady hath long time both liu'd and lou'd,  
With a good Knight whose yeares were tender yong,  
Nor euer from his bosome she remou'd,  
But like the luy still embracing long,  
Who with like care his carefull loue approu'd,  
And in the consort of her musicke song:  
Clasping her with the twine of compast armes,  
While with his kisses he her fancy charmes.

Chast and most strong his loue did still remaine,  
And in her brest his flowring yeares he spent,  
No time nor strife his spotles loue could staine,  
But still was pleased when she was content,  
And would begin to mourne when she did plaine,  
Gricuing on woe, ioying on meriment:  
One breath betwixt their kissing lips doth passe,  
One onely soule in two faire bodies was.

The sight of them could Enuies force abate,  
And make her Isie hardnes to relent,  
Such loue their interchanged thoughts begate,  
As still to mutuall ioye their hearts were bent,  
Within their breasts Loue in his kingdome sate,  
Minding to fill them with deepe rauishment:  
My thoughts scarce view, my words their loue disgrace,  
That for such heauenly things are farre too base.

Thus each delighted with the others sight,  
Would needes a solacing in progresse ride,  
Sometimes for fainting heate they would alight,  
And gentle rest fast by a riuers side,  
There cooled with the shade, while they delight  
Their pleased eyes, when in the streames they spide  
The siluer river to reflect againe  
Each others looke, and make their loues seeme twaine.  
Sometimes

## *Vertues Historie.*

Sometimes downe in a groue they would discend,  
And print the grasse with beauties brightest scale,  
And with the bowes a round faire garlonds bend:  
Mingling in posies which their loue reueale,  
While to their eares the birds loue-carrols sent,  
And still among the doue with groning peale,  
Doth seeme to sound a farewell to his loue,  
Which fowlers hand did cruelly remoue.

Thus doe they spend the summer of their daies,  
Studying how each might worke them most delight,  
Vntill they came to these vnluckie waies,  
Where let blacke darkenes stand and pitchy night,  
And fearefull Earthquake vp huge mountaines raise,  
Renting the place that wrought these loues despight:  
Let still fierce winter choke the dying spring,  
And none but night-crowes groning scriches sing.

For hither when they came, a Knight they met,  
That without challenge or a cause of hate,  
Vpon her Knight downe blowes full spitefull let,  
And with his sword infring'd the pretious gate  
Which keepe the entrance to his senses seate,  
Freeing his soule with this vntimely fate:  
Downe on the luckles earth his bones doe fall,  
While Saints his soule in heauen doe install.

Which when his Lady saw twixt rage and wo,  
His sword she takes from out his loued hand;  
And to her ruthles enemye doth goe,  
Offering with force that tirant to withstand,  
But to her strong heart, weake armes answer no,  
Telling they cannot such a waight command:  
This while that cursed man with cruell blade,  
Into her tender brest a deepe wound made.



## *Vertues Historie.*

O heart so stony as the rocky mount,  
On which fayre *Rhodope* doth buried lye,  
VVhich doth th' *Hircanian* Tigars far surmount  
In blood and tirranizing crueltye :  
That of sweete beautie mak' st so small account,  
And couldst with that accursed flaming eye,  
Beholde a Lady thus most louely fayre,  
Driuen to mightie woe and deepe dispayre.

But O : he heares me not, for he is fled,  
And with him caryed her louing Knight,  
VVhile she twixt woe and grieve is almost dead,  
The fayrest and the farre most griued wight  
That euer heavenly beautie coloured,  
In whom terrestriall shone diuine light:  
Her wound doth pearce vnto her gored heart,  
Yet then that wound she feesles more wounding smart.

This cruell Knight was one that still did liue  
By rapine, and did rob each passenger:  
VVho, as he once with valiant Knight did striue,  
Lost his left hand, when he did deeply sweare,  
That all the Knights he could to worser driue,  
Should so be martird, thus he vp doth reare  
VVithin his fort a heape of ioyned hands,  
That like a wall now raysted lofty stands.

And this is he that with *Pirino* fought,  
Thinking such victory of him to win:  
But so the prouidence of heauen wrought,  
That to repent his deedes he doth begin,  
For now to conquest he is shamefull brought,  
And he that hath so proudly cruell been,  
Lyes at the mercie of the victors hands,  
VVho leade him prisoner in vnknown bands.

After

## *Vertues Historie.*

After this battell to the fort they go,  
VWhile still *Pirino* solaceth the Dame,  
Hoping to drye the Ocean of her wo,  
But now too late all comforts sun-shine came,  
Griefe more resisted still the more doth grow,  
And ioy too slow goes euer halting-lame:  
The cloudes which darke the glory of her light,  
Presage there still shall be blacke sorrowes night.

Now to their lodging are they come at last,  
VWhich was the castle where this tirant dwelt:  
VWhen straight his bloody triumphes forth they cast,  
And now *Pirino* hath so carefull delt  
That she is cured, but her sorrow past,  
Can ne're be past which she so deeply felt:  
VWhile in a tombe she layes her loued Knight,  
VWhose view might banish thence all ioyes delight.

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### CANT. 8.

*Pirino with the Lady doe addres,  
To see fayre Bellamy's sad funerall,  
Her lone is tolde, and how all comfortles,  
For Amians sake in wo her heart doth fall:  
Where blacke eclipsing of his radiant light,  
Maskt her sweet soule in sorrowes drery night.*

O VWho could giue me Eagle soaring wings,  
Or plumes of vapours to ascend on hye:  
VWhich *Sol* exhaled to the heauen brings,  
That I might see the true diuinity,  
Or view the Angel-thoughts, whose musick sings  
Vnto heau'ns maker sweetest harmony:  
There onely could my thoughts the thought approue  
Of thought-surpassing and diuineſt loue.



## *Vertues Historie.*

Which like *Arion* in the floting waues,  
Can chaunt the Dolphins with his charming sounds,  
And bindes al base affections as slaues,  
VVhich with celestiall beautie it confounds,  
Sweet-saluing balme which wounds dispayred saues,  
VVhose kingdome cannot suffer earthly bounds:  
The cinsure of all our ioyes it is,  
VVhich leades vs through a world of happily blisse.

VVhich this faire Lady fully doth possesse,  
Raught with the thought of her deceased Knight,  
And euer keepes her soule in heauineffe:  
Like to the Moone that must obscure her light,  
VVhen as the Sunne his beautie doth repressse,  
Of whom she borrowes beames of all delight:  
VVhich buried in the sad Sepulchrall ground,  
Downe to the earth her captiue thoughts hath bound.

Which when *Pirino* saw (whose words of ioy  
Still wooed sorrow to forsake her brest)  
Knowing her Knights deare fight wrought this annoy,  
Did counsell her to leaue this idle rest,  
VVhich still with musing thoughts did her accioy,  
And trauell forth where neuer should molest  
Her quiet thoughts the spectacle of death,  
VVhose saddelt fight the soule disquieteth.

She loth to leaue that where her treasure lay,  
VVhere she had buried thoughts of all delight,  
Determines neuer to depart away:  
But so *Pirino* sues by day and night,  
That now she'le wander till a certaine day,  
Though sorie to remoue from out his fight:  
VVhose tombe containd with him her dearest hart,  
VVith whom in graue she left her better part.

The

## *Vertues Historie.*

The Sunne appeareth in his bright aray,  
Of fry beames and golden-wreathed gowne,  
Meaning to cheare her with so sayre a day,  
Now hauing banisht mistie vapours downe,  
VVhen forth they ride now settled in their way,  
Flying the place whence all her woe was growne:  
But though vnto the farthest Indes thou flie,  
Swifter then winde will sorrow after hic.

They had not gone as farre as Scithian bow  
Darts forth an arrow with his beuded string,  
Before they see where an old man doth goe  
As fast as dried bones his feete can bring:  
Who ouertaking him whom age made slow,  
Enquired whither he was traouailing:  
But deepest cares that rained in his thought,  
Had silence and black melancholy brought.

At last they roud him from his musing dreame,  
VVhen of a Ladies death he gan a tale,  
VVhile downe his cheekes doth raine a pearling fireame,  
From out the clowdes of wrack and weary bale:  
And this is *Algiger* that doth exclaime  
Against our life, that still in woe doth fall:  
VVho like the luckles owle these many yeares,  
Neuer but at some funerall appeares.

And *Bellamy* was the whom vgly death  
Hath couerd with the graues yntimely shade,  
Her now in dusky bloome he manteleth,  
That with her beames the world astonisht made,  
And on her corps his colours he displayeth,  
VVhose colours in too soone a haruest fade:  
The weeds doe grow and worser things suruiue,  
VVhile as the good are thought too long aliu.



## *Vertues Historie.*

*Pirino* like to *Dadals* winged sonne,  
That from great heau'n fell to the lowest flood,  
To sinke in sorrowes drery gulfe begun,  
And in his face doth care depaint in blood,  
The victorie he ouer him hath wonne,  
Senceles with too much sence of grieffe he stood:  
Vntill thus brake the cloudes into a showre,  
VVhich forth with drery teares he thus did powre.

O cursed earth goe maske thee from the light,  
VVhose light is quenched that did make the day,  
And let the spring no more with greene bedight,  
Adorned be with birds or Musick lay,  
For she in whose sweeteface spring still did write  
Her chiefeft glory, now in sad decay,  
Hideth the heauenly lampe of louely grace,  
And shadoweth from the earth her starrie face.

Her tresses like the flakie beames of morne,  
Sheueld along vpon her snowie backe,  
That did the golden *Tagus* colour scorne,  
And dangling made behinde a goodly tracke,  
Those which haue many harts in triumph borne,  
And in loues sea haue driuen them to wracke:  
These lye embraced of the basest ground,  
VVhose curly traines haue many louers bound.

Thus forth he driues his passion with his plaint,  
VVhen they agree to see her funerall,  
VVhere we will leaue them wearied and faint:  
Pricking toward her wofull buriall,  
VVhile I full deeply greend will striue to paint,  
The story of this ladies wofull fall,  
And when my teares shall stop their weeping spring,  
I will plaine forth the tale I cannot sing.

VVhen

## Vertues Historie.

When at the Dukes long time those thirtie Knights,  
Lay for to try who could obtaine the prize,  
Where with continuall shewes and pleasant fights,  
They woo'd the deare attention of her eyes:  
One Knight there was whom she about all wights  
Most dearly lou'd, whose image deeply lyes,  
Sealed below vpon her softned hart,  
From which his pressure neuer can depart.

Within the blessed heaven of her thought,  
His comely face, the onely starre doth shine,  
Whose beautie to her soule amazement brought,  
That then her selfe a wight was more diuine,  
Like *Cynthia* when on *Latmos* top she spide  
The sleeping sheheard lately dreaming ly'ne:  
She is amazed at so great a grace,  
And with sweete Mel-dewes doth anoint her face.

No winde but *Amian* her ship doth blow,  
Filling with pleasing breath fayre beauties sayles,  
In which to happy lles she meanes to go;  
He beares the rule, and he so much preuailes,  
That now she doth not sticke to let him know,  
How his most gratefull suite with her auails:  
Who though with those sweete wordes in loue he was,  
Yet scarce for kisses could he let them passe.

She grants the garden where delight doth ly,  
Which with chaste marriage they will seale anon:  
And now she brings him roses by and by,  
From which he wished neuer to haue gone,  
So sweete an ayre vnto his smell doth fly,  
That would with pleasure quite haue ouerflowne,  
Drenching olde aged bones in youthfull dew,  
And make the hoary man his dayes renew.

T

Like



## *Vertues Historie.*

Like *Hibla* fields, where though Bees still doe suck  
The hony of delight and ravishing,  
Yet in this fertile field remaine to pluck  
Heauenly posies, deeply solacing  
Distressed mindes which sharpe misfortune strook,  
And in thoughts winter doth vpreare the spring,  
Whose verdant head shall neuer languish downe,  
But stand adorned with a flowry crowne.

VVhich when the lothed wooers quickly found,  
They did enuy the happie chance he gate,  
And ten of them in mightie challenge bound  
His valiant heart to answer their debate,  
VVho now thus settled on so sure a ground,  
Scorned the easie shafts of fruitles hate,  
And sent them answer that next rising day,  
He would controle what enuy durst to say.

But still fayre *Bellamy* doth him intreat,  
To shun the dangers of the bloody fight,  
And doth his breast with sighs and gronings beat,  
Enchasing with fayre pearle her clouded sight,  
VVhich drooping downe her richest eyes beget,  
And to his louing bosome take their flight,  
VVhen watering the plants that loue doth sow,  
They quickly made sweet lowly pittie grow.

But he that had his vowed promise past,  
VVith kisses still her opned lips doth stay:  
She opneth still, he still his lets doth cast,  
Sweet lets, which let him in where beautie lay,  
That doubt it was whether she spoke so fast,  
Because more kisses of him gaine she may:  
Or kisses seeming for to stop the dore,  
Still kist, because they would haue kisses more.

Thus

## *Vertues Historie.*

Thus in this golden chaine of purest loue  
They past the euening, when with rustie coach  
The Rauē-hud night her dusky traine vphoue,  
And grisly darknes doth on earth encroach,  
The weary Sunne his wagon doth remoue,  
Seeing the vgly night so neere approach,  
That from the furnace of her sooty throte,  
Forth foggy vapours and black smoke vphote.

Still *Bellamy* vnluckie chance doth feare,  
VVarned with fatall noyse of nightly foule:  
Now doth she seeme sweet *Amians* voyce to heare,  
Yeelding the lowly present of his soule  
Vnto his maker, when her heart doth reare  
A swelling sigh his fortune to condole,  
The mournfull presage of some euill hap,  
As lightning flames before a thunder-clap.

Thus in sad thought the silent night is spent,  
VVhen *Phæbus* gan vpreare his firy crest,  
And had the easterne heauen with flames ybrent,  
VVhen streight doth *Amian* leaue his quiet rest,  
And armed to the place appoynted went,  
VVhere nine strong Knights that enmitie profest,  
He with his speare dismounted to the ground,  
VVhere with disgrace an humble seate they found.

Like to a loftie ranke of Cedar trees,  
VVhen *Æolus* is kindled deepe with rage,  
And with a whirlwing vp from earth he frees  
Their riuen rootes, now layd in equipage  
VVith baser shrubs, while to the heauen flies  
The roring noyse, ypent in iron cage  
Of tumbling vapours that doe scour the ayre,  
Inuested highly in a cloudy chayre.



## *Vertues Historie.*

Now *Bellamies* good heart for ioy doth dance,  
Driuing forth stormes of sorrow and of care,  
VVhen the tenth Knight his speare did high aduance,  
That ouer al his armour *Cypres* ware,  
Shadowing with clowdes of griefe his countenance,  
VVho now towards the Knight his palfrey bare :  
VVhere meeting with a hideous shiuering stroke,  
Their yelding speares in sprinkled dust they broke.

On foote they try what thus on horse doth faile,  
Each other driuing with a deadly blow,  
And with their weapons kisse the splitted maile,  
Which riuen, gushing blood in streames doth throw,  
While now or neuer meaning to preuaile,  
Sir *Amian* droue vnto his riual foe,  
And with his sword his intrals doth vnclose,  
Whose soule vp fled his earthly bowels doth lose.

Viewing the sword wherewith his riual fought,  
That on it written had his fathers name,  
Whom with a charme from vnknowne land he brought,  
He curst himselfe with much vnworthie blame,  
That he this wofull Tragedie had wrought :  
For well he knew his brother was the same,  
Whom with his wretched might he thus had slaine,  
To whom his father gaue that hurtfull gaine.

Now horror ringeth in his griued soule,  
And guilt of thought that he his brother flew,  
VVhere fearfull fight his rest doth deepe controle :  
Wherefore vnto his palfrey he withdrew,  
And doth to none his inward griefe vnrole,  
But to the woods all solitarie flew,  
Banishing any thought of pleasing mirth,  
Or any ioy which lighteth on the earth.

# Vertues Historie.

In leauy shadowes and in bushie brakes,  
He with the wood-doue grones for pinching wee:  
Somerimes in hand his cursed sword he takes,  
But streight his sword he from his hand doth throw,  
Now in a bush a hollow nest he makes,  
From whence he swares his seete shall neuer goe:  
Each little glimpse of light his soule doth shun,  
And in despayre to headlong death doth run.

But how fayre *Bellamy* doth rue his case,  
Plaining and seeking him that her forgot,  
Is deeply grauen in her parched face,  
Which doth not lighten as it did of late,  
Earth-brightning beames of neuer-matched grace:  
But frowning with the force of angrie fate,  
Downe drooping doth she close her folded eyes,  
Drowning themselves in their owne Nectaries.

And euery where to seeke him out she sends,  
Whom neuer shall againe her eyes behold:  
Wherefore despayring now her thoughts she bends,  
Fixt on th' Idea of his heavenly mold,  
And to her minde that only food she lends,  
While from her body rest she doth withhold,  
And still her beautie doth consuming pine,  
Wasting those torches which are so diuine.

Like as the sweetest Querister of Night,  
VVhen rau'ning fowle bereft her of her young,  
VVhile *Phæbe* sends from high her cloudy light,  
Vnto the Moone in chanting tunes she sung,  
That rauishing the trauailer with delight,  
Made him bewaile the birds disproferd wrong:  
So doth each eye lament this wofull plaint,  
VVhich beautie makes while she in woe doth faint.



## *Vertues Historie.*

But O my pen transforme thy swanny face,  
And in eternall streames my inck shall weepe:  
Drive madly downe thy coach in tumbly pace,  
O thou which heauens mightie lights dost keepe,  
That neuer beames may brighten any place,  
Since she in neuer-ending dreame doth sleepe:  
O *Bellamy* that now vntimely dyes,  
And in sad tombe deaths cruell triumph lyes.

The fearfull thought of her deare loued Knight,  
Eats on her heart consuming vitall heat,  
That taking in the world not left delight,  
She with her hands that softest breast doth beat,  
And vexeth still with grieve her wofull spright,  
VVho weary of so much vneasie seat,  
To heauen on her snowy pineons fled,  
VVherein *Iones* breast she layes her quiet head.

Now came the Knights that dwelt remoued farre,  
To see the buriall of this Angel wight:  
The Sunne arose with his low drooping carre,  
To see (though grieu'd to see) that wofull sight:  
And *Pirri* with the dame arriued are,  
And *Cypribe* her tombe forsaketh quight,  
Prepar'd all to doe honour to her graue,  
The latest honour now her corps could haue.

Where with such rites as loue and wit deuise,  
VVhich might renew a storie to expresse,  
She was entomb'd in most glorious wise,  
Accompanide with number numberlesse,  
VVhile fountaines overflow the Dukes sad eyes,  
That now for lack of teares to weepe doe cease:  
Faine would he in her armes his death-bed see,  
That in two heauens he and his soule might bee.

But

## *Vertues Historie.*

But enuious fates resist his louing will,  
VVho doe command his soule here to remaine,  
VVhere with lamenting noyse she plaineth still,  
Yet neuer can her plaints bring back againe  
That soule, which mounted on Olympus hill,  
In sacred spirits and the Muses traine,  
Singing soule-pleasing tunes her dayes doth spend,  
VVhose musick and whose dayes haue neuer end.

And now ye heauens, if euer Musick straine  
Issued from a concord-mouing spheare,  
Then in a dolefull language helpe to plaine,  
And mourning part in sorrowes consort beare:  
For neuer shall you haue like cause againe,  
For neuer may the like on earth appeare:  
And for her death ring out a dolefull knell,  
VVhile dewy teares at euery stroke distill.

And ye fayre Ladies in a pilgrimage,  
Attiring blushing white in mourning black,  
Vntill the world shall end his endles age,  
Goe to her tombe, and plaine her beauties wrack,  
Raught from the earth by deaths vnsatiate rage:  
And though your teares can neuer bring her back,  
Kissing her tombe, to *Libitina* pray  
The earth may easie on her bosome lay.

VVhere with the parbreake of vnclowded hell,  
Night wraps in ruggy black the ayres darke face,  
Still vomiting fro her defiled Cell,  
The shadowy fumes that mought the light disgrace,  
VVhile scriching Owles their fearfull stories tell,  
Hoarsly complaining in that gloomy place,  
Groning with hollow notes their dismall song,  
VVhile trembling tunes to guiltie hearts they rung.

The



## *Vertues Historie.*

The wolues about that haples place doe cry,  
And howling weepe for her that lieth slaine:  
Sometimes in hollow fearfull harmony  
The Harpyes doe a dumpish consort straine:  
Sometimes it seemes they see some passing by,  
That on a beere a carkasse doe sustaine,  
VVhite meager Death with hels vnchained hags,  
Vpon her graue display their pitchie flags.

---

## *The Conclusion of all.*

**T**Hese haue I sent vnto the *Muses* hearse,  
Whose daies of honour now haue found an end,  
To spread therewith this my latest verse,  
Whom the unworthie world too much offend.

Nor yet because some change-affecting braine  
Debarth the *Muses* and their sacred hill:  
Fault I my selfe as hauing writ in vaine,  
Know he I only loue the *Musicke* skill.

But whether he delight in feates of armes,  
Or prouder wantt the glorie of his race,  
Know he I feare not *Marshall* alarmes,  
Nor yeeld a step his friendship to embrace,  
Though now in shade I whisper to the winds,  
And plaine the *Muses* can no harbour finde.

FINIS.

